

TWO
SERMONS
ON THE THIRD
OF THE LAMENTA-
TIONS.

Preached at Hanwell in the first yeere of
his Maiesties reigne, 1602. The one
by I. D. the other by R. C.

PHILIP. 3. 1.

*It grieueth me not to write the same things to you, and
for you it is a sure thing.*

ISAIAH 55. 3.

Hearken, and your soule shall live.



AT LONDON

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Preached at Hanwell in the first year of
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by the Reverend Father in Christ, William
Purcell, D.D.

Printed by I. Blount, at the Sign of the
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The Doctrines of the first Sermon.

1 That godly sorrow and holy affliction, is the best remedy in any sorrow and affliction.

2 That the greatest affliction that should touch the hearts of Gods people, is the affliction of the Church.

3 That we must neuer cease our humiliation, till God give consolation.

4 That good men must vse their eyes to stirre up their hearts to pitie and compassion, that so they may be pierced with griefe and sorrow.

5 That the more harmelesse men be, the more they shall bee molested.

6 That when troubles arise against our bodies and states, Satan labours to breed troubles in our soules.

The Doctrines of the second Sermon.

1 That there is no distresse, no breaking and crushing whatsoever, that shall hinder Gods people from praying unto him.

2 That the name of God is the onely cause that brings Christians into Gods presence, and makes them to call vpon his name, with strong cries, and comfortable requests.

3 That Gods children in their prayers and seruices doe marke and know how they speed.

4 That those whom God hath once heard in mercy, bee will alwaies heare.

5 That they that would not haue God to shut his eares against their prayers, must be sure that they sigh and crie.

6 That in the day that we draw neere to God in prayer, God will draw neere to vs in mercy.

7 That God onely can cure the heart of feares.

8 That God is the maintainer and upholder of his people.

9 That there is nothing done, spoken or thought against any Christian, but God takes knowledge of it.



THE FIRST SERMON.

Lamentations, chap. 3. vers. 48. &c.

48 Mine eye casteth out rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 Mine eye droppeth without stay, and ceaseth not.

50 Till the Lord looke downe and behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye breaketh mine heart, because of all the daughters of my city.

52 Mine enemies chased me sore like a bird without cause.

53 They shut up my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.

54 Waters flowed over my head, then thought I, I am destroyed.



ALL these words doe containe a Lamentation of the Prophet, and of the rest of Gods people for the iudgements of God on his Church and on Ierusalem his owne citie: and for the misery and calamitie that lay vpon their whole state. After this sort they bewaile their

heauie case: *Mine eye casteth out rivers of water, &c.*

Now this Lamentation is set forth,

Partly by the maner of it, and

Partly by the causes of it.

The diuision.

The first Sermon.

The manner of it is declared in the foure former verses, and that by diuers circumstances; namely,

First, by the greatnesse of it: for in regard of the misery of the daughter of his people, he did not onelie moisten his eyes with teares, but sent forth riuers of teares, vers. 48. which is an excessiue kinde of speech vsuall in the Scriptures, and signifying that he wept abundantly.

Secondly, by the continuance of it. *Mine eye droppeth without stay, and ceaseth not*, vers. 49. ther shall it cease, but I will continue lamenting till the Lord looke downe from heauen, and shew some signe that he doth behold and pitie our estate, vers. 50.

Thirdly, their lamentation is set out by the sinceritie of it, that it proceeded from trueth and vprightness: *Mine eye breaketh mine heart*, vers. 51. That is, the things that I see with mine eye, doe cause me to lament wonderfully: so heauie is the case of all the daughters of my citie, that it euen breaketh my very heart.

The causes of it are of two sorts: { 1 Inward, which was griefe of heart. vers. 5.
2 Outward, which was the cruelty of their enemies: which is set forth:

First, by a similitude taken from fowlers: *Mine enemies haue chased me sore like a bird*, vers. 52. Implying thereby that they made it a sport, a recreation and trade to pursue Gods seruants: they did as it were goe a hauking after innocent and harmelesse soules.

Secondly, their crueltie is described by a comparison taken from hunters, who vsed to digge pits to the intent that great beasts might fall into them, and so be intrapped: and then they would throw stones at them, or vie some such meanes to kill them, when they durst not goe downe into the pit where they were.

Such

The first Sermon.

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Such were the plots and endeavours of their adversaries: they were as cunning and as eager in their attempts against the people of God, as men would be in killing a Beare or a Lion, that otherwise would kill them if they were at libertie, vers. 53. Lastly, their crueltie is set out by a comparison drawne from the inundation of waters: their rage was like the violence of mightie riuers and floods, that ouerflowe and drowne all that comes in their way, vers. 54.

Vers. 48. *Mine eye casteth out riuers of water*] Their affliction was so sore, that their case in regard of any earthly succour that could be expected, was helplesse and remediless. In vaine it was to speake vnto men; for they were inexorable, because they were mercilesse: in vaine it was to take weapons; they had had too much of that before, and by that meanes *Zedekiah* had euen vndone them: and as for other helps, they were as farre to seeke as for these. Now therefore they fall to weeping, and seeke to relieue themselves by teares, and by sighes and grones before the Lords throne in heauen. Whence ariseth this doctrine:

That godly sorrow and holy affliction is the best remedie in any sorrow and affliction whether it be from men, from Sathan, or from God himselfe: whether it be on bodie, on state, on name, or on the minde and soule of a man: whether it bee on particular persons, our selues, or those that are about vs, or on the whole land, on church or common wealth, this is the most soueraigne remedie in all miseries and extremities whatsoeuer. This inward godly griefe is a salve for euery sore, and a plaister for euery wound. To weepe and cry and powre out our hearts before God is that course that they here take, and that which wee must take in the like distresse: according to the measure of the affliction, and as it is more publike or priuate, so must be the measure of our lamentation. To this there is

Doll. 1.

Godly sorrow
a soueraigne
remedic.

Isaiah, 61.
12. &c.

is a promise made in the prophetic of *Isaiah*: That when our hands cannot help our selues; nor our tongues preuaile with others, yet then we may relieue our selues by our prayers vnto God: for in that place the Lord vndertaketh *that mourners shalbe comforted, &c.* God the Father sends his owne Sonne, and the Father and the Sonne doe send the holy Ghost, that when men are mourning and feeble their pouertie so as it breakes their hearts, the spirit which is the comforter may minister comfort vnto them: that when they feeble their captiuitie and imprisonment, Christ Iesus may set them at libertie: be they neuer so weake, neuer so meane, neuer so miserable; neuer so sinfull, if once they come thus to mourne, they shall haue their hearts comforted: though they be couered with ashes, God will giue them beautie for ashes, and put on them the garment of gladnes, for the spirit of heauines: bellowing vpon them that which shall make them cheerefull, *euē the oyle of ioy*: not an earthly but an heauenly oyle.

And there is great cause why God should deale so with such kinde of persons: for

Reason 1.

Isaiah, 61.
12. &c.

1. Hee is full of pitie and compassion: and therefore the prophet *Isaiah* biddeth vs *rent our hearts and not our garments*: that is, bring inward sorrow that may crush and breake the heart, and then turne vnto the Lord: which if we do, we shalbe sure of reliefe: and why? *The Lord is mercifull* (saith hee) *and our God is very readie to forgive.*

When we see our children mourning and confessing their faults, wee cannot but haue our bowels of compassion yearning towards them.

If *Iacob* had stood by and heard his sonne *Ioseph* pitifull moane that in the anguish of his soule hee made vnto his brethren, when they dealt so vnnaturallie with him, would hee not haue pitied him, and by strong hand haue rescued him from his cruell sonnes? What shall wee then thinke of God? he is farre more mercifull than *Iacob* was,

and we are nearer vnto him then euer Ioseph was vnto his father? And therefore when we mourne in a holy manner, certainly *hee will drisse and haue mercie vpon vs.* Hee cannot containe, when hee sees our hearts full of sorrow, and our eyes full of teares: for the sighs and groanes of his people doe giue him no rest in heauen.

Secondly, this godly mourning must needs be a speciall remedie in all manner of afflictions, because it makes our prayers very forcible: it sets an edge vpon our petitions, and makes vs pray heartily, seruently and strongly. When *Jacob* wept in his prayer, it was so effectuell that hee preuailed. When Gods people ioyned together to powre forth buckets full of teares, drawne from the bottome of their hearts before the Lord, they were maruellously helped: for the great measure of their teares, made their supplications more seruent: and therefore it is said of Christ Iesus himselfe, *that in the daies of his flesh hee did offer vp prayers with strong crying, and teares vnto him that was able to saue him from death.* When our Sauour was about the principall point of his mediatorship, then did he gather strength vnto himselfe by this meanes.

Genesis 32.

1. Sam. 7. 6.

Heb. 5. 7.

Thirdly, this must needs bee very effectuell, because it is exceeding forcible against sinne: for when sorrow comes into the heart, sinne goes out, it will not lodge there, vnlesse it be cockered and made much of. When euery one laments his iniquitie, and mournes ouer Christ Iesus whom he hath pierced by his sins; then there is a fountaine opened to wash them from all, euen from finnes that made a separation betwixt God and vs. *Zach. 12. and 13.*

3

Seeing then that this godly and holy sorrow is a meanes to make God pitie vs, to make vs call earnestly vpon him, and to expell sinne, which might hinder vs from preuailling with him, it must needs follow that of all remedies in times of distresse, this is the best and surest.

This serues for instruction vnto vs to vse all meanes and furtherances, whereby wee may attaine vnto this. There are many afflictions abroad, many nearer home, in our

Use 1.

The first Sermon.

owne townes and families : nay there are many things amisse in our owne hearts : here is a medicine for euerie one of our maladies : let vs get it and vse it, and all arguments and helpes that may continue and encrease it : as the Nineuites, hauing direction by the spirit of God (as many of them as were his) did when *Jonah* threatned destruction against their citie within fortie daies; they abased themselves and fell to mourning, and vsed fasting to helpe it onward : the people must shew it in their countenances : the lowing of the beasts, and crying of the infants must further them to this holy remorse and grieve for their great and hainous transgressions. They had grieved the Lord by their iniquities, and therefore now they would grieve themselves with godly contrition for them. Hence it was that Gods people amongst the Iewes vsed to weare sack-cloth, to lie on the ground, and to put dust vpon their heads, which were then meanes to further them in the worke of humiliation.

Therefore now that wee feare danger is nere vs, let vs betake our selues to this holy mourning : if wee refuse to doe it, and still continue to be hard-hearted; if the pestilence come into our families, wee are likely to be taken away with the first, and to haue not only our bodies, but our soules in danger, and that of Gods wrath and euerslasting displeasure.

Therefore let vs seeke to haue our hearts mollified by this excellent meanes of God; and for this end, consider of the blessings of God plentifully powred downe vpon our nation, and vpon our selues in particular : as they did in the day of their humiliation, of whom *Nehemiah* maketh mention.

Let vs seriously recount how many mercies wee haue enioyed, and how much they haue been abused : how many afflictions wee haue felt, and how little wee haue been bettered : how many deliuerances wee haue found, and yet how carelesse, nay how rebellious wee haue continued.

Let.

The first Sermon.

11

Let vs weigh with our selues what hurt our finnes haue done vnto vs; how many good things they haue turned from vs; and how many euils they haue puld vpon vs: and aboute all, let vs remember what a huge weight and multitude of miseries they haue brought vpon our Sauour: namely, debasement and humiliation: sorrowes and sufferings: assaults and temptations: the heauie burthen of our guiltinesse, and the grieuous punishment due for our deserts: the rage and violence of most malicious men, and the wrath and displeasure of the most righteous God: torments of bodie, and terrors of soule, and death it selfe, a painfull death, a shamefull death, and a cursed death.

Secondly, hereby may those bee confuted that thinke it dangerous to meditate on such things as will discomfote them, and bring them to desperation, as they speake: and therefore they would haue no man to tell them of their finnes: but let them heare of the mercies of God in Christ: that they are likely to escape Gods hand when the pestilence comes neere them, though others escape not, but bee swept away on euery side of them, being notwithstanding as good or better then themselves. Farre be it from vs that any here present should haue such thoughts, or giue such care to such carnall counsell.

There is no danger in Christian sorrow, but the more of it, the better. And therefore the Apostle James saith: *Suffer affliction, or afflict your selues, and sorrow and weep: and if any thing keepe you from mourning, away with it: let goe laughter, and let carnall mirth be turned into mourning, and your ioy into heavinesse:* O then you cannot cast down your selues so low, but God will raise you vp againe, and strengthen your hearts with the greater comfort.

Obiect. Oh but to weepe and lament, it is not manhood: it argues that men want courage and fortitude, and is altogether vnbecoming the person of a man: they will trust in God (they say) and neuer mourne for any matter.

Doth it argue want of courage to lament? Nay it argues want of faith not to lament for sinne. What doe

B 2

they

The first Sermon.

they thinke of *Israhel*, was he a coward? They cannot say so: for the holy Ghost giues him that commendation, that he had strength and courage not onely to preuaile against men, but with the Angell of the covenant. And what was his conflict? *He wept and prayed*, as the Prophet *Hofea* witnesseth. Was this cowardlinesse? Nothing lesse: for the Scriptures commends it for notable strength.

Hofea 12.3.4.

And further, what doe they thinke of *Dauid*? was hee a coward? they will not so disgrace that renowned King, and worthie Captaine of the Lords host, as to lay vpon him the imputation of cowardise: yet hee makes mention of his teares and that often: as in the Psalmes, where he saith, *that hee watered his couch with teares: that his eyes did gush forth with riuers of teares, because men kept not Gods law: and such like.*

Psal. 6.6.

Psal. 119. 136.

Zacharie 12.

And what will they say to all Gods people, of whom it is said, that they *should mourne as they did for Iosiah in the valley of Hadadrimmon*, where hee was slaine, whose death all Israel did bitterly bewaile? and as one *mourneth for his first borne*, the onely heire and hope of the familie. What will they answer to this? will they condemne all Gods people for a generation of cowards? Nay, this is so farre from bewraying want of fortitude, that wee may boldly say, that when men are fullest of such teares, they are fullest of fortitude.

For what shall wee thinke of the Lord Iesus Christ? had hee no heart? was hee destitute of courage? that could not possibly bee. Nay, when hee was to exercise the fulnesse of his power: to vndertake such a worke as no creature durst attempt: when he was to offer vp himselfe to his father as a sacrifice for the sines of the Elect: when hee was to encounter the Lords wrath and his iustice, Satan and death, hell and damnation, and all the power of darknesse, that same time he wept and that abundantly. And I hope none will say that then our Sauiours heart failed him, notwithstanding his bitter teares and cries.

Heb. 5.

In truth those that doe not weepe when there is cause, they

they are without heart, and utterly void of true fortitude, subiect to maruellous feares and violent distempers, (which arise from a base minde) for what is the reason they are so afraid of death? but because they haue not mourned for their sinnes, and so remoued the sting of death? which if they had done, they would triumph ouer death, and say with Saint Paul, 1. Cor. 15. *O Death where is thy sting?* their hearts would then stand fast as the strong mountaines, and not be afraid of any ill tidings: No nor of the pestilence that walketh in the darke, nor of the plague that destroyeth at noone day. *Psalm 112. Psal 91.6.*

3 Thirdly, this makes exceedingly for the comfort of those that are mourners in Sion: they are in sauiour with God, and out of the reach of all danger, so that nothing can befall them for hurt. *Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* more happie is the poore man that weeps for his sinne, then the greatest potentate that reioyceth in the flesh. *Math. 5.*

Verf. 18. For the destruction of the daughter of my people.] Here is the cause of their lamentation: it was the ruines and calamities of Gods Church, and poore distressed seruants: whence this doctrine may be gathered.

That the greatest affliction that should touch the hearts of Gods people, is the affliction of the Church: as is euident out of this text: For when Gods inheritance was spoyled, some put to the sword, others led captiue, the Temple of God razed, and the exercises of religion abolished, this made them to grieve exceedingly: this was it that wrought vpon *Ieremie*, and made him breake forth into those wishes, *Oh that mine head were full of water, and that mine eyes were a fountaine of teares, that I might weep day and night for the slaine of the daughter of my people!* As if he could not haue his fill, nor weep enough for the desolations of Sion, and the miserable ouerthrow thereof which he foresaw. *Doct. 2. What afflictions doe go neerest the hearts of the Saints. Ierem. 9.1.*

This was it that went neere the heart of good *Nehemiah*; who being in great prosperitie, Cup-bearer to the king, *Nehem. 1.4. and 2.1.2.*

mightiest Monarch that was then in the world; and in speciall fauour with him: yet for the affliction and reproch wherein the Church of God was, hee conceiued such inward sorrow, that he was sad in the Kings presence: which yet was a thing that he must and would haue forborne, if possibly he could. *Moses* goes further: hee doth not onely mourne, but is content to lay downe his prosperitie, and to expose his estate to a manifest ouerthrow, so that he might helpe forward the deliuerance of the afflicted Israelites, and saue them from the hands of their oppressors: For he knew he could not be in fauour with *Pharaoh*, if he should ioyne with them, whom hee so cruelly handled: but *he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to be called the sonne of Pharaohs daughter*. *Hester* seemes to goe somewhat beyond him: for she resolues with her self for the cause of the Iewes (who were then all destinated to slaughter) to aduenture her life in going to the King in their behalfe: *I will goe* (saith she) *though it be contrarie to the law, and if I die, I die*.

Heb. 11. 34.
25. 26.
Act. 7.

Hester 4. 16.

But our Lord Iesus Christ goes beyond them all: for when hee was in supreme excellencie, hee was so affected with the wofull case of his Elect, into which they had brought themselues by their owne rebellions against him, that *hee humbled himselfe, and tooke on him the state of a servant*; and submitted himselfe to many sorrowes, disgraces, and sufferings, not only while he liued, but principally when hee died (as hath been before in part declared) that so hee might deliuer his people from the wrath to come, and from eternall death, which they had deserued, and must haue else endured.

Philip. 2. 6. 7.

Reasons
1.

And there is great reason why the affliction of the Church should so affect vs: and that first in regard of the communion that is betwixt God and them: for they are called the Lords flocke, his chiefe treasure vnder heauen, his first borne, yea the very apple of his eye: and therefore being so deare vnto the Lord, they should bee deare vnto vs, and wee should haue a tender care of them and

mourne

inourne in our hearts for any euill that befalls them : as *Jeremie* did, chap. 30. that the Lords flocke should goe into captiuitie.

Secondly, wee should be thus affected in regard of the communion that is betweene them and vs: for they are our members, yea neerer vnto vs then our bodilie members: and wee should haue greater care of the whole Church, then of our selues, because it more concernes Gods glorie. Howbeit indeed in caring for them, wee care for our selues too: labouring to preuent their afflictions, we preuent our owne, and weeping for others miseries, wee get armour that will keepe off miserie from our selues.

And that there is no danger in dealing for the seruants of God, may appeare in *Exodus*. One would haue thought there had been some great euill neere *Moses* and *Aaron*, when they must fetch out of *Egypt* such a people from such a King: not only by petition, but by command, and threatening if he would not yeeld: we would haue imagined that *Pharaoh*, a proud man, would neuer haue indured this at their hands; and yet we see they were in perill, but of all others most safe.

3 Thirdly, the affliction of the Church must needs work most vpon the hearts of Gods chosen, because of the insultations and triumphs of the wicked against them, when they crie out, *where is now their God?* And that was it that *Moses* did vrge to moue God to spare his people, when he threatned to destroy them for their Idolatric, he entreates God to remember his great name and to spare them, *lest the Egyptians should say that hee had brought them out maliciously to slay them in the mountaines, and to consume them from the earth: or that hee was not able to bring them into the land of Canaan.* This is it that goes to the heart of the faithfull, when they heare profane persons reuiling the host of the liuing God. Oh these are your professors (say they) these are they which runne with their Bibles to sermons, these are they that were wont to bragge that prayer would preuent or remoue Gods iudgements: doe you

not.

not see that they are swept away by the pestilence as well as others? that they were pinched with pouertie and necessitie as well as others? that these and the like despitefull and bitter speeches and taunts, doe wound the very hearts of such as loue Gods glorie, and desire the prosperitie of his Saints, and so cause them much to bewaile the tribulation of the Church.

Use 1.

Amos 6.6.

Here are to be reproofed all carelesse persons, who, so it goe well with themselues, regard not the Church at all: let it sinke or swimme, all is one to them. So they may bee free from the contagion, and sit quiet in their houses, whatsoeuer becomes of their neighbours, it skils not: *They drinke wine in bowles, and giue themselues to all excessse, but no man is sorrie for the affliction of Ioseph.*

Isai. 22.13.
23.14.

This is a great fault in these daies, now many Christians are taken away, and the sword of the Lord is stretched out still, and many are smitten downe on euery side; yet there is as much feasting and sporting and frequenting of Wakes, and that on the Lords Sabbath, as if al things went well with vs. Which argues strange infidelitie, and is such a sinne as the Lord will pursue euen vnto death, if it be not reformed: as the Prophet *Isaiah* threatneth: *In that day (saith he) did the Lord of hostes call vnto weeping and mourning, and to baldnesse, and girding with sackcloth, and behold, ioy and gladnesse, slaying Oxen, and killing sheepe, eating flesh and drinking wine, eating and drinking, for to morrow wee shall die: and it was declared in the eares of the Lord of hostes. And what followes thereupon? Surely this iniquitie shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of hostes.*

Which being so, it stands Magistrates vpon, to vse their authoritie for the redresse of such things, as are so dangerous to the whole state of the land.

But there is yet another greater fault amongst vs then this that hath been named. For many doe not only walke securely in the affliction of their brethren, but desire the continuance and increase of it, in hope that they shall enlarge their possessions, and better their estate by meanes thereof:

thereof: as if scarcitie of people did bring abundance of riches, whereas in truth it is quite contrary. But howsoever, those that haue but a glimpse of Christianity in them, would rather haue the society of others, then liue alone in the midst of the earth.

3. There is yet a third and worse sort then the former, which come iustly vnder this reproofe: Such I meane as long for stirs and mutinies and insurrections. Poore men (say they) can get nothing, but some few great ones carie away all, and so they grow to murmuring and repining, and multiplice speeches of discontentment: grieving and lamenting that at the taking away of the former Prince all things should be so quiet and peaceable. Down (say they) with these Magistrats and with these Preachers, this too much plenty yeelds vs nothing; and therefore they could also be glad of vnseasonable weather, that through scarcitie of things there might arise some tumults, and so they might get provision from such as fall into their hands. These haue bloody hearts.

4. Yet others there are that are worse then these, who doe not onely wish for such troubles of the Church and Common-wealth before they come, but reioyce at them when they are come: And when others eyes are full of teares, their mouthes are full of laughter; as *Jeremie* chargeth the Moabites: *He magnified himselfe against the Lord: Jeremie 48. Moab shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision: 26, 27.*

For diddest thou not deride Israel as if hee had bene found among theeues? For when thou speakest of him, thou art moued. This was their manner of dealing, and this is the property of all such wicked Moabites: they cannot speake of the calamities of the faithfull, but they are wonderfully affected with ioy, so that they cannot sit still in their places, they are so moued with mirth and laughter. These haue cruell hearts, and shall be met withall accordingly as Moab was.

5. But especially are those here to bee condemned that doe not onely reioyce at the troubles, but at the sinnes of those that are religiously affected: if they slippe through infirmity,

infirmity, and fall into any sinne: if they be ouergone with worldlinesse (which is greatly to be taken heed of) if they be lifted vp with pride, and manifest the same by violence of words, or actions, or bee stained with any the like vices, presently they exclaime against them and take on beyond measure: Wot you what? (say they) the great professor hath spoken or donethis pñ that: and so they are as glad together, as if they had gotten a kingdom, and came home in triumph.

Herein they shew themselues to bee right Satans, who takes pleasure in nothing so much as in sinne.

6 And yet there is one higher degree of sinne, contrarie to the practise of these holy ones; which is, when men are so farre from grieved that it goes ill with Gods seruants, that if they bee somewhat amisse, they will make them worse, and helpe forward their miserie, and for that end misinforme and incense such against them, as they know will inflict punishments vpon them. These are inspired by the spirit of Satan, as those who are mentioned in this text are inspired by the spirit of God.

Use 2.

2 This is for great comfort vnto them that can mourne for the calamities of the Church. This is a notable testimony that they are feeling members, and haue in them the life of christianity, when others troubles are theirs, others losses theirs, others reproches theirs, and any distresses and straites of others are made theirs.

Isay 66.10.

They that lament for Sion, shall be comforted with Sion. God hath promised them singular consolation; it is their portion, and they may confidently expect it.

Vers. 49. Mine eye droppeth withont stay.] From which words this doctrine may be gathered,

Doct. 3.
How long humiliation must be continued.

That wee must neuer cease our humiliation; till God giue consolation. When the Lord ministrerh vnto vs occasion of griefe, wee should neuer surcease, vntill hee reuiue our hearts. We must not begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh: but hauing a good entrance, wee must goe on with our worke and bring it to perfection: and if God giue vs a heart

heart to mourne, let to it and neuer giue ouer, till hee see vs free. So they are exhorted in another chapter of this booke, *Let teares runne downe like a river day and night, take thee no rest, neither let the apple of thine eye cease; arise, cry in the night, poure out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord, &c.* And iust it is, that wee should neuer make an end of mourning, till God make an end of afflicting: according to their example who are mentioned in *Nehemi. 8. 9.* *Nehemi, that wept at the hearing of the Law, till they were bid to reioyce.* It was a notable commendation of that people, that they would not leaue off, till they had warrant to leaue off. So *Mordecai* when *Queene Hester* sent him garments, to clothe him, and would haue had his sackcloth to be taken from him, hee would not receive them, but humbled himselfe so long, till he was assured of deliuerance. *Hester 4. 5.*

So *Jacob* would neuer let goe his hold, but still wrestles with the Angell, and continues weeping, and praying, till he obtained a blessing: so the woman of Canaan stickes close to it, and is importunate with Christ for her daughter, and would neuer desist, nor let her suite fall, til she had preuailed with our Saviour. *Gen. 32. Marth. 15. 21, &c.*

And there are reasons, why we must neuer breake off, but still continue our humiliation, and seruencie, till God shew by good effect that he hath mercifully respected vs, and our supplications.

1 For first, what is the ground of true humiliation? Is it not sincerity? Now wheresoeuer there is sincerity, there is faith, and faith will neuer make an end till it conquer, it neuer giues the onfet, but it obtaines the victorie. For it hath to deale with God, and hee neuer bids it make an end; (vnlesse it bee by way of triall, as he dealt with *Jacob* and with the woman of Canaan) till it haue gotten the desired successe. *1. Reason.*

2 A second reason may bee, that Gods children haue hope as well as faith; *now hope neuer makes ashamed:* because it is neuer disappointed of the thing hoped for. *Rom. 5. 5.*

3 Thirdly they haue loue, which makes vp a threefold

Cant. 8. 6. 7.

corde, every twist whereof is stronger, then all the cords of the world: *For love is strong as death, &c. the coales therefore fierie coales, and a vehement flame. Much water cannot quench love, neither can the floods drowne it; &c.*

In regard of all these it is impossible that those that soundly begin the worke of humiliation should bee put backe, vntill they haue obtained their purpose. Which may be further scene in the spouse; *Canticles 3:* who neuer giues ouer seeking till *shee had found him whom her soule loved.*

Use 1.

1 This therefore is to encourage men to godly constancie, and importunity, when any distresse lies vpon the people of God. If they bee earnest for their deliuerance, they shall not misse of their marke: *but those that sow in teares, shall reape in ioy*, in the due time of the Lord. Whether they be suters for the Church or Common-wealth, or for themselues, in regard of crosses on their bodies, anguishes in their soules, or afflictions in their estate, the Lord will looke downe from his holy place in heauen vpon them, and heare and helpe them at length, if they perseuer without fainting. This is liuely and notablie expressed vnto vs in the parable of the vnrighteous Iudge, *who though he feared not God, nor reuerenced man*, yet heard the poore widow, and in the end did her right against her aduersary, because of her importunitie. O then what shall we thinke of God? will a man, will a wicked man, will a mercilesse man be moued by importunitie; and will not God, will not the gracious God, will not the God that is full of compassion bee moued to auenge his seruants, and to minister iustice vnto them? *I tell you* (saith Christ) *I that am the wisdome of the Father, and know all things, euen I tell you*, that he will doe it: *He will auenge them, and that quickly.* It is as possible that God should be without ease, as that they should be without helpe.

Luk. 18. 12.

2 Secondly, they come iustly here to be reprov'd, that will set vpon Gods seruices only by fits and starts. If they haue not present helpe from God, they will seeke vnto the world

world, and vnto Satan, and to carnall meanes. If they cannot mend their estate by prayer, they will patch it up by other shifts: if their hearts haue not present comfort from Gods spirit, they will soeke comfort from tellers and leaue companions.

Commonly such people grow of all other most bitter against those holy exercises which they haue prophaned, and therefore could haue no benefit by them. Such were they of whom the Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh, who are so impudent and shamelesse, that they dare expostulate the matter with God himselfe: *Wherefore haue we fasted?* (say they) *we haue punished our selues, and thou regardedst it not.* *Isa. 48.3. &c.* See what bragges they make of their seruices, they that doe least and worst, commonly brag most. But what saies the Prophet? *Behold in the day of your fast, ye will seek your owne will, and require all your debtes.* 4. *Behold ye fast to strife and debate, &c. 5. Is it such a fast that I haue chosen, that a man should afflict his soule for a day, and bow down his head like a bul-rush? &c.* Thus wee see what reckoning God makes of their fasting, what account soeuer they themselves make of it: and yet if they faile of their expectation, they will quarrell with the Ministers of God, with the word of God, and with God himselfe; because vsing such exercises carnally, they receiued no benefit by them.

3 This must be an instruction vnto vs; when wee are to deale with those that are afflicted in their soules, that wee handle the matter warily and circumspectly, when their hearts are wrought vpon; wee should not helpe them too soone out of their sorrow, but exhort them to wait for comfort from heaven: for al cannot be presently well with the soule and therefore it is good wisdom to aduise such still to hold on their course. Haue they begun to examine their hearts? let them riske yet further into them. Haue they begun to dislike their sins; and themselves for their sins? let them get a more thorow detestation, and holy indignation against them.

It is not good for one that takes phylicke to giue vp the potion forth with, as soone as it begins to worke, *Peter* as a wise phyfition gaue other counsell to his hearers that began to be moued by his doctrine. They had beene mockers, and scoffers, they had crucified the Lord of life, and so exceedingly endangered their owne soules: wherewith being charged by *Peter*, and being pricked and stung in their hearts and consciences, they aske the Apostles; *Adon and brethren, what shall we doe?* Hee doth not tell them, as some vnskillfull Ministers would, your case is good: bee not discomforted, my soule for yours, you shall doe well; but hee bids them amend their liues, repent, and get sound and hearty sorrow for their sinnes, that so being thoroughly humbled, they might afterwards bee soundly comforted.

Act. 3. 37. 38.

Veil. 51. Mine eye breaketh mine heart.] The meaning of which words is; that his heart was maruellously moued with the things that his eye did behold. Whence this doctrine offereth it selfe for our learning: That good men must vse their eyes to stirre vp their hearts to pitie and compassion, that so they may bee pierced with griefe, and sorrow. This wee haue proued vnto vs in the example of Christ Iesus, the most absolute paterne of all holinesse; For it is said of him by the *Euangelist Marke*, *That when hee lifted vp his eyes, and saw the multitude*, which had no faithfull Ministers to instruct them, *his very bowels were moued with commiseration towards them, because they were as sheepe without a shepheard.*

Deut. 4.
The eye must
affect the
heart.

Mark. 6. 34.

Pro. 32. 9.

In this regard it is that *Salomon* describing a good man, calls him *a man of a good eye*: and saies of such an one: *That hee will bestow his bread vpon the poore*; he seeth the faces of some pale, and of others blacke, by reason of long want and forbearance of foode: Others hee beholdeth naked and cold, and exposed to the iniurie of the aire; and of all sorts of vnseasonable weather. Now hauing a good eye hee will not onely take a view of them, but bee inwardly affected with the sight of them, and from a tender and pitifull

pitifull heart minister reliefe vnto them.

Hence was it, that *Moses* did not content himselfe to *Exod. 13. 17.* know of the miseries of his poore brethren, the Israelites *Exod. 2. 11.* by heare-say, but he would goe out to see their burthens, and how they spent their paines and their strength; and after all, were recompensed with stripes from their taskmasters: which did so worke vpon him, that it made him stretch forth his hand to auenge some of them. So likewise in the Gospell of *Matthew*, it is set downe as the proper tie of all holy and religious persons, that they will goe to the *Mat. 25. 35.* prison to see, and to the house to visi the distressed members of Christ, and take all occasions, to bring their owne hearts to pite their poore brethren: and will euen compell their inward parts, to beare a burthen with them, that they may bee more helpfull vnto them.

And if you desire to be instructed why you ought so to doe, and what arguments should moue you thereunto, let this be one; that as the senses are sanctified with that faith, and those other graces of loue and compassion which are first wrought in the heart: so the same being well seasoned therewith, become seruiceable helpers to the heart, and take all opportunitie, by the severall objects presented vnto them, to store it with increase of all good affections. And take this for another, that there is no godly man so poore, or in such necessity, but by this meanes hee shall haue both occasion, and ability to exercise mercy (though he cannot minister reliefe) in taking to hart the calamity of his brethren, which his eyes behold, & as a fellow feeling member mourning together with them. Yea, because there are other aduersities which befall men, beside pouertie and want; therefore it cometh to passe many times, that the rich and mighty receiue comfort from their inferiors, who apprehend their griefes, and are touched with commiseration for them.

Which makes greatly for the reproofe of those whose eyes and eares are as filthie sinkes to conney all uncleannes into them, who haue eyes full of adultery, that they cannot
Ufe. 1.
 I. An adul-
 terous eye,
 looke

2. An enqui-
ous eye.

3. A couetous
eye.

Pro. 23. 12.

4. A niggard-
ly eye.
Pro. 23. 6.

looke about them, but they are stirred vp to heauily and vile lusts. Who haue eyes full of enuie, that they cannot behold their brethren, that are equal vnto them, or goe before them, or come neere vnto them; but presently they fret against them; and others welfare is their woe and miserie. Others haue a *wicked eye*, that they cannot looke vpon their neighbours cattell, houses, possessions, and the like; but forthwith their hearts are poysoned with a couetous desire of them; and then they cast about how they might make them theirs; & if they cannot, they eate vp their hearts with discontentment; as *Ahab* did. Agreeable to this, is the place of *Salomon*, where he saith; *A man of a wicked eye, insatiable after riches*; but he shewes there, that God meets with him: for he shall be so far from getting more, that hee shall not keepe that which hee hath; but the more hee runnes after riches, the faster pouertie shall pursue him.

Another kind of ill eye is a niggardly eye, spoken of by the wise man in the *Proverbs*; where he giueth this counsell: *Eate not the bread of him that hath an evil eye*, &c. that thinks all lost that goes from him, and all taken out of his stomacke, that goes into other mens bowels: he will giue men a welcome for fashion sake, but all that eate of his meate, are a vexation vnto him; and these thoughts runne in his head while men sit at his table: This god might haue spared: this would haue serued my familie all the weeke: I had rather haue their roomes, then their company, that thus trouble and charge me. And so his heart is euer full of discontentednesse: Thus it is apparant, that many haue their hearts sinfully affected, by meanes of their eye; as Gods children haue them holily affected.

Verf. 52. *Minie enemy chased me sore*, By the similitudes here vsed, it appeares how fierce they were; and yet all was without cause, as the text witnesseth. Indeed, God saw in them matter that deserved correction, and affliction; but their aduersaries had no occasion offered, why they should behaue themselves so cruelly towards them.

From

From which this doctrine may be collected; That the more harmlesse men be, the more they shall be molested; This we see in *David*: hee prayed and fasted, and mourned for his enemies; and yet they sought his woe and ruine. Therefore he saith in one Psalm, *the foundations must bee cast downe, and what hath the righteous done?* there was great preparation, and there must be sore and mortal wars; they would sweepe all away, and not leaue a good man in the land: but, *what hath the righteous done?* There must be a great execution; but where is the conuiction? that is iust nothing. So they cried against Christ, *Away with him, away with him, crucifie him, crucifie him, &c.* But what euill hath he done? (saies *Pilate*.) Oh *Pilate* must know, that me so iust as they were, would neuer haue deliuered him into his hands, except he had beene a notorious offender; whereas indeed, *he was a lambe without spot*, and none iniquitie was found with him. Agreeable to this is the saying of *David*; *the wicked gusheth his teeth against the righteous*. The more innocent and iust any one is, the more he shall be maligned and pursued. And this stands with reason:

I Because wicked men haue a quarrell against Gods image in the innocent, as Satan their captaine hath, and therefore will they be bitter against them.

This may bee seene in *Jeremie*, hee had done them no wrong, but brought vnto them the ministry of saluation; and yet euery one curseth him, and crieth out against him; and why? because God at that time shewed himselfe more cleerely in *Jeremie*, then in any other. The like violence they shewed against *Steuens* and *Paul*, casting dust into the aire, and crying out upon them; that one would thinke them brutish creatures. And why were they so full of rage against them, but because they were full of grace, and deafe faithfully in the worke that they were set about? because they did helpe to raise vp the kingdome of Iesus Christ, and to race the kingdome of Satan more then others? But for Iesus Christ, who was the ingrauen image of his father, they had a greater quarrell against him, then euer they had

Doct. 5.
The innocent
molested.
Psalm. 35. 13.
13, &c.
Psalm. 11. 3.

Luk. 23. 2.

Psalm. 37. 12.

I Reason.

Ier. 15. 10.

A. 8. 7.
A. 8. 22. 23.

Psal. 33.

against any *Yong bulls of Basan*, such as were full of might and malice: *Dogs and Lions*, such as were full of rage and furie, did all beset and *compass him about*; their madnes was neuer so great against any as against him, because none was euer so good as he.

2

2 An other reason may be, because there is a contrariety betwixt the good and euill: though they be of the same countrie, of the same towne, of the same family, yea of the same parents, yet are they not of the same world. For so saith our Sauour Christ to his disciples; *ye are not of this world, &c.*

Iohn 15. 19.

Esau and Iacob had the same parents, and were both together in the same wombe; and yet they contend one with another. *Rebecca* their mother would faine know the cause of it; the Lord tels her the cause. *Two nations are in thy wombe; and two manner of people shall be diuided out of thy bowels: &c.* The one, the seed of the serpent, the other the seed of the woman. There is not so great enmitie between a man and an adder, as there is betweene the righteous and the wicked; and therefore no faulkener nor hunter: no hawke nor hound are more desirous and greedy of the pray and game, then the outrageous enemies of the Church are of the destruction of Gods seruants; because they are possessed with the spirit of Satan, and violently ouercaried with hellish fiercenesse.

Gen. 25. 12. 23.

1. Pet. 4. 4.

3 Thirdly, the cariage of Gods children doth disgrace them, and therefore they maligne them: *because they run not to the same excessse of riot with them; therefore speake they euill of them.* For impious persons reason thus: They goe to Godshouse, I goe to the Ale-house: They carrie themselves soberly, I carrie my selfe intemperately: they are esteemed, I am contemned: I know they like not of mee, as I do not of them, and therefore what mischief I can do them, they shall be sure of it.

Use 1.

This point ministreth vnto vs matter of instruction: that whosoever would walke in a godly course should looke for troubles, and that sundrie waies: yea and to haue his
very

very life stricke at by such as are enemies to the Gospell of Christ : or if they cannot take away that, let him be sure his name shall pay for it, and be iniuriouſſie and shamefully traduced. Whosoever resolues to *live godly in Christ Iesus, must looke for persecution*. It is impossible that there should bee so many fowlers and hunters, and not labour to catch somewhat.

Indeed they will be fauourable enough to grosse adulterers, theeves, and other malefactors : and if any be more forward to punish and redresse such; Oh it is great cruelty, they deale hardly and seuerely : they would be very loth that breed should be taken away.

But if they be religious persons that are to be punished, no torture is too great, no death too grievous for them ; therefore let those that are Christians looke to it : they shall haue great men against them, as *David* had princes : *Psal. 9. 12.* They shall haue meane men against them, as he had drunkards on the ale-house bench to make songs of him : There they will vtter their merchandise : false tales and vile reports.

Those that are further off will bee against them, those that are neighbours, nay some that are of their owne familie will be against them : no bands of ciuilitie, no bands of kindnes, no bands of nature will hold, where the bands of Christianity are wanting.

But if the case be so (will some say) were it not better to let religion alone, that one may keepe himselfe quiet without such disturbance ? *Objection.*

Nay, that will not be a sufficient reason, nor a warrantable excuse : neither need any bee so farre discouraged : For as Christ saith ; *in the World ye shall haue trouble* : So he *Ioh. 16. 33.* promisseth, that in him wee shall haue peace and comfort : if there were a thousand worlds, and all against one of vs, yet one comfort of Christ is able to counteruaile all their oppositions.

If God giue vs assurance of a better life, what great matter is it if they depriue vs of this life ? If wee see the
 2
 Angels

Angels and Saints, and Christ Iesus, and the whole Trinitie to be with vs; what perill is it, if all leaud base sinfull men be against vs? If God promise to make our names and persons glorious, what need wee feare though they seeke to make vs ignominious? *Not one haire of our head shall fall without Gods providence*: We are not in their power, though we be in their hands.

They may proceed so farre as to arraigne vs, conuict vs, and condemne vs; and yet (except God will) they shall not execute vs: though our naturall brethren and sisters and friends forsake vs, God will giue vs new brethren and sisters and friends, that shall be more kind and faithfull vnto vs, then euer they were.

But if men for feare of difficulties and dangers, will not aduventure vpon religion, are they sure to keepe themselves from troubles by that meanes? Nay, if a man will not suffer for a good cause; God can and will make him suffer for an ill cause. *Achisophel* would leaue *Dauid*, and take the stronger side, though the worse side: but was not that to his destruction? So *Iudas*, he would turne from Christ to the Pharisies: but did that bring him any peace? No, it tended to his vtter confusion.

Use 2.

This teacheth vs another lesson, that when wee see men so hunted and pursued, wee doe not condemne them presently and say, Surely these are bad fellowes: for otherwise they would neuer bee so much maligned nor molested. But what shall wee thinke of Gods people here that were hunted and chased, and that for their liues? shall wee say that these were the worst in the world? Nay rather, if we would conclude any thing, let it be this: These men are enuied and wronged, and wee see no euident cause why it should be so; therefore it is likely they are good men and deale faithfully.

Verf. 54. *Then thoughts I, I am destroyed.*] This was the case not onely of *Jeremie*, but of the rest of Gods seruants in captiuiity, they were euen past hope for any recovery.

Doct. 6.

The doctrine that here may be gathered is: That when troubles

troubles arise against our bodies and states, Satan labours to breed troubles in our soules: when there are fightings without, vſually there are terrors within. This is manifest in the Chapter that wee haue now in hand, verse 17.18. *When they were farre from peace and prosperitie, then they conclude; their strength and hope is perished from the Lord.* Hee had made them many gracious promises (they could not denie) but now they neuer expected the performance of them: all their hope was gone.

And thus we see that Gods children haue still beene exercised with great terrors and feares within, when they haue beene set vpon by grieuous trials without: the truth whereof we see in *Iob* and in *Jeremie*, the violence of whose inward conflicts, made them to breake forth into marvellous great distempers.

And this proceedeth from his malice, and mortall hatred wherewith he doth maligne vs: for he neuer thinketh that our lode is heauie enough vpon vs, how many afflictions soeuer doe presse vs. No pouerty, no paine, no contempt, no molestations, no crosses, or troubles, vpon our selues, or our friends can satisfie him, but hee would if it were in his hand, adde an hundredfold more to the most and greatest; which because he cannot doe, he disquieteth the mind as much as his power serueth, to discourage the heart, that it may be the more feeble and weake to sustaine the burthen of afflictions.

And this his cruelty is also mingled with craft and subtiltie: for now an aduantage seemeth to bee offered vnto him, which he will by no meanes neglect, the more easily to perswade men that God is become their enemy, or hath no care of the, ſithence he pursueth them with such calamities, or maketh not speed to deliuer the, as though his loue could not possible bee, where there is any aduersity. So he dealt with our Saviour; *If thou bee the Sonne of God, Mat. 4.3. command that these stones bee made bread.* As if hee should haue said: Is this the God you haue serued all this while? See how he deales with you now: You are certainly for-

faken:

saken: if you will eate stones you may: other prouision he makes none for you; and is it likely then that you are the sonne of God? if you thinke you are so still, trust no more in him, but prouide for your selfe, and command that these stones bee made bread, that so you may haue reliefe that way.

And so he dealt with *Iob*, in hope of successe according to his desire: that if God would but lay his hand on *Iobs* estate, and torment him in his body, hee doubted not but to handle the matter so with tentations in his heart, that he should curse God to his face.

Use 1.

Since the case stands thus, let vs in time of prosperitie, arme our selues with strong reasons, whereby wee may assure our hearts that the Lord is our God: and this will appeare to be no more then needefull, if wee consider how Gods dearest seruants haue been, and are put to it: and though they haue had a good measure of confidence, yet their grounds haue bene shaken, and they themselues much perplexed: *God hath turned away his face from them, and they haue bene troubled.* Since (I say) the case stands thus, let vs get good euidence for our happie estate in Christ, and for our interest vnto eternall life. Let vs haue our harts seasoned with true piety; with the loue of Gods word; with the feare of his name; with zeale for his glorie, and the like vertues and graces of Gods holy spirit: and that before distresses come, that so in the euill day we may haue good assurance, of Gods vnualueable and vchangeable fauour in his sonne.

Psal. 30.

For if wee bee slacke and negligent herein, and onely hope well, and trust that God will bee mercifull vnto vs, and accept of vs for his children, then when Satan, and affliction, and our flesh ioyne together, and make an assault against vs, our hope will proue but a broken reede: wee shall be tossed with xuary waue; yea sore perplexed and vterly ouerwhelmed in the gulf of distresse, if not of despair it selfe.

Therefore let men make sure worke before hand especially

cially before death approach. For otherwise the diuell will tell them, that then it is too late to set vpon matters of godlinesse, as hee euer perswaded them before that it was too soone: then will hee bring before them all former reckonings, and charge vpon them the iniquities of their youth; and if their grounds be not very good, their hearts will vtterly faile them, and then they are vndone for euer.

For if the Church of God make this woefull complaint, *that their hope and strength were perished from the Lord*: how shall wicked vnregenerate persons be able to stand, when God shall come against them?

Not with matters of temptation (as he doth against his children) but with matters of truth; not of mercy, but in iudgement; not that the diuell makes them belecue so, but that indeed it is so. When God shall once begin to draw out his sword against them, where will they bee then? If Gods children doe feele such a heauie burthen of it, doe not you thinke it will presse them downe to the gates of hell? When no friend shall stand by them, no shifts and inuentions of wit shall bee auailable for them: when all mirth will be vncomfortable, and euery thing frowne and looke heauily vpon them: God, and Satan, and sinne, and their owne consciences, being all vp in armes against them. When this (I say) comes vpon them, (as come it will sooner or later) which way can they turne them? and how can they shift off that heauie load of Gods wrath and indignation, which will lie as a mountaine vpon their guiltie soules? though they haue beene full of boasting in the daies of their iollitie, and haue vaunted what a notable faith they haue, yet (as *Zephania* saith) in that day the strong man shall *crie bitterly*.

Zeph. 3. 14.

Howsoeuer they imagine to put off these things, yet let them know that their strength will bee found too weake, and their skill too small, to ward off the Lords blowes.

The thiefe that hath courage enough to rob and steale vpon

vpon the high-waies side, yet hath he little enough when his poore executioner is to deale with him: euen so shall it bee with all wicked and proud men, when the time of their execution doth approch: their hearts shall faile them for the things that shall come vpon them, and continue vpon them for euermore.

Use 2.

2 Secondly, this doctrine offereth vnto the godly matter of great consolation: albeit their case many times seeme vncomfortable, yet they must not iudge according to that which they see: for God many times laies such afflictions vpon them, that their case is thought both by themselues and others to be desperate and vnrecoerable, and yet indeed it is happie and blessed. As it fared with *Paul*, who had the sentence of death past vpon him, and died daily almost; so that when hee went out in the morning, he was in danger to be slaine ere hee returned home againe: and yet God did vphold him, and made him hereby more confidently and comfortablie to rest and relie vpon him.

3. Cor. 4. 11.

2. King. 4. 1. &c. So the good Prophets wife thought all helpe was gone: her husband was gone, her goods gone, her labour gone, her children like to be gone, and she had no meanes in the world to relieue her selfe; yet euen then when she was almost past hope, God provided a competent estate for her. So *Hezekiah* concludes that he was gone, he should neuer goe to the temple any more; neuer see man more among the inhabitants of the world: his webbe was cut off, &c. with many speeches to this effect: and yet wee reade how God restored him againe, and prolonged his life for many yeeres.

Isa. 38. 10.

Say then that one haue great discomforts in his soule; great breaches in his estate; grievous and dangerous sickness vpon his body, &c. yet here is his comfort, that God that raised vp others, can and will in due time raise vp him.

Obiect.

Oh but my faith faileth me, and is it not said, *according to your faith it shall be vnto you?*

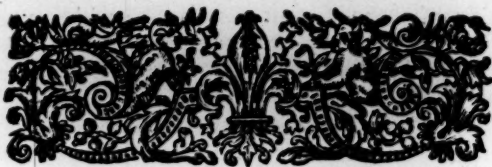
Answer.

True, if you haue no faith, you can looke for no mercy: but

but if you haue any faith at all, it shall be with you according thereunto; but how farre beyond it, God tels you not, for he doth for vs many times *aboue that, that wee can aske or thinke.*

But you imagine you haue no more faith, then you haue feeling, whereas it is farre otherwise: there may bee much faith, and little feeling: faith may be strong, and yet strongly assaulted: comfort may be departed, and yet not vtterly lost: we may feare we are cut off, and yet not perish: for Gods strength and perfection, is seene in our weaknesse and imperfection: though wee cannot belecue, yet God is still faithfull: though children will not credit their parents, yet they will relieue their necessities, and so will God ours; albeit through weaknesse of faith wee cannot so fully apprehend and applie his promises to our selues: He sees it is not malitiousnesse nor grosse infidelity in vs; and therfore hee will pitie vs, and beare with vs, rather then in seuerity proceed against vs.

FINIS.



THE SECOND SERMON.

Lamentations, chap. 3. vers. 55. &c.

55 I called vpon thy name O Lord, out of the low
dungeon.

56 Thou hast heard my voice : stop not thine eare
from my sigh and from my crie.

57 Thou drewest neere in the day that I called vpon
thee : thou saidst, Feare not.

58 O Lord, thou hast maintained the cause of my
soule, and hast redeemed my life.

59 O Lord, thou hast scene my wrong : iudge thou my
cause.

60 Thou hast scene all their vengeance, and all their
deuices against me.

61 Thou hast heard their reproch, O Lord, and all
their imaginations against me.

The con-
nection.



Ye heard in the words immediately
going before, the wofull distresse that
the children of God were driuen vn-
to : how they were cast into the dun-
geon, and stript of all outward and in-
ward comforts.

Now here he shewes what remedy
they vsed : they cast their burden vpon the Lord, and ho-
ped for succour at his hands : and the reasons that moue
them so to doe, are set downe in the text to be two.

The

The first is taken from their present behaiour towards God; which was, *that they prayed, and sighed, and cried,* vers. 55. 56. And that they might bee so much the more regarded, they declare that it was not without cause, that they were so earnest with God: for *they called vpon him out of the low dungeon*: vers. 55. that is, out of great and grievous affliction. And yet further mischiefe was intended, and their aduersaries did speake and plot all cruelty against them, vers. 60. *Thou hast seene all their vengeance, and all their deuices against me*: 61. *thou hast heard their reproch*, &c. And that this might appeare not to bee a false imagination and conceit of their owne, he saith; *Lord thou hast seene my wrong*, &c. *Thou hast seene all their rage*. 59. 60. They are all euident and apparant before thee, how closely and couertly soeuer matters be caried in respect of men.

2 The second reason is drawne from Gods former goodnes, and graticus dealing towards them, *Hee had heard them and drawne neere vnto them*: he had considered of them and of their cause: and they knew hee was still as good as he was wont to be, and they vsed as good meanes as they were wont to doe; and therefore they conclude, that he that drew neere vnto them heretofore, would now doe the like againe; vers. 57. 58. These considerations doe reuiue their spirits, and raise their hearts euen out of the pit of desperation. And thus much for the meaning and order of the words. Now let vs harken vnto such doctrines and instructions as are therein contained for our learning.

Vers 55. *I called vpon thy name.*] This is the speech of the whole Church, who by reason that they are members of one body, and temples of one spirit, are brought in speaking throughout this whole booke, as if they were but one person. By [*low dungeon*] is meant desperate cuils: they were as it were shut vp in a dungeon, where they had no hope of escaping: yet out of the depth of miserie and anguish and horror, they called vpon the Lord. Whence naturally ariseth this doctrine.

Deff. r.
The faithfull
can neuer be
driven from
prayer.

Pfal. 88. 6.

Isa. 38. 1. 21.
2. King. 2. 2. 1.

That there is no distresse, no breaking and crushing, whatsoeuer, that shall hinder Gods people from praying vnto him. It may for a passion and a fit, cause them to bee at a stand, and bring them euen to their wits end, as it did these here; but they will recover themselves, and get heart againe: and though in their distempers they say God hath forsaken them (which is a wofull thing) yet they recall their words againe, and at length betake themselves to the right meanes of recouerie; which is, to make their griefes knowne vnto God, who is able to saue and readie to succour those that seeke vnto him. This may bee euidentlie seene in *Psal. 88. vers. 6.* where the man of God bemoneth his case, saying: *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, and in the deepe. Thine indignation lieth vpon mee, and thou hast vexed me with all thy waues.*

From which words, together with the rest in that *Psalme*, we may gather, that he was in wonderfull sore perplexity. Now in this extremity what doth hee? *O Lord God of my saluation* (saith he) *I crie day and night before thee*; as if hee should haue said: Though thou hast cast off mee, yet I call vpon thee: and though thy hand lie heauie vpon me, yet I pray still. So *Hezekiah* was smitten (as it seemes) with the plague, and that vnto death: and was in such extremity, *That he chattered like a crane or a swallow; and mourned like a dove*: and concluded, that hee should goe to the gates of the grane, and be deprived of the residue of his yeares. His case in appearance was desperate, so that it was as hard to recouer him, as to make the sunne in the firmament to goe backward: yet he set vpon the matter by prayer, and obtained his desire; in so much that fiftene yeeres were added to his daies, so that no man in the world had euer such a lease of his life as he had. So *Ionah* when hee fled from the presence of the Lord, and was therefore cast into the Sea and swallowed vp of the whale: being in a low dungeon, where hee had neither sunne-light nor candle-light: yet hee doth not thinke his case remediless, (as indeed it was not) *but hecried in his affliction vnto the Lord,*
and

and he heard him : Out of the bellie of hell did he crye, and God ^{Jonah 2.1.2.} heard his voice : and then as sinne and passion had brought him into danger, so repentance and prayer did helpe him out of it.

Yea the Lord Iesus Christ, when the burthen of our sins and of his fathers wrath for the same was so grieuous, that it made his soule heauie vnto the death, and pressed blood out of his veines : yet the more horror he was in, the more ^{Luk. 22.42.44.} feruently he prayed vnto his father. ^{Heb. 5.}

And the reason why Christians cannot by any distresse be driuen from prayer, is :

1 Because he that is once Gods child, is euer so : and e- ^{Reason 1.} uery child of God, hath the spirit of prayer, which will alwaies stir vs vp, to make requests with sighes and grones that ^{Rom. 8.26.} cannot be expressed.

If those that cast Gods seruants in prison, could withall pull Gods spirit out of their hearts, then they had done somewhat to the purpose : but they may as well plucke the sunne out of the firmament, as the holy Ghost out of their soules. And therefore they can neuer bring them so low, but they can cast their eyes vp towards heauen, and make their complaint vnto their God. And if hee be with them in prison as he was with *Ioseph*, their restraint shall be farre more pleasant then their aduersaries liberty : and they shall bee able with *Paul* and *Silas* to sing Psalmes at midnight ^{Ag. 16.25.} through ioy and gladnes.

2 Secondly, Gods children haue faith in their hearts, and the nature of faith is to beare downe all lets before it, and to breake thorow all manner of hindrances. Therefore Gods seruants hold vp their heads, because their *faith* ^{Ioh. 5.4.} *ouercomes the world* : And therefore wicked hypocrites faint, because the world ouercomes them. When Gods child goes vnto the dungeon, faith goes with him ; and then hee will neuer giue ouer praying, but bee more feruent in praying.

And this is certain, that the greater our distresses be, the lesse comfort worldly helpes will afford vs : but the greater

extremities wee bee in, the more comfort will spirituall helpes minister vnto vs. When we are helpelesse and hopelesse, then faith workes wonders, and neuer shewes forth it selfe so mightily and powerfully, as when it workes alone. Beautie, and wealth, and strength, and other outward things of the same kind, when miseries lie heauie vpon vs, and we begin to cast an eye to them, expecting some reliefe and comfort from them; will deale with vs, as the high Priests did with *Iudas*: When all went well with him; they made shew of fauour and friendship towards him: but when in the horror and anguish of his soule he makes his mone vnto them, crying out *that hee had sinned, in betraying innocent blood*; they sent him away with an vncomfortable answer: *What is that to vs?* (say they.) Such cold comfort shall we receiue from any earthly supports and props whereon we rest and stay our hearts: when we haue most neede of them, they will stand vs least in stead. So that we may truly say of them, as *Iob* did of his friends; *miserable comforters are ye all*. But as for those that liue by faith in Christ Iesus, they are vnderlaid with better props then the world can afford: for when they haue none other to deliuer them, they can deliuer themselves by prayer, and by calling vpon Gods name out of the lowest dungeon.

Use. 1.

First, this may serue to shew vs the difference betwixt the wicked and the godly, in times of outward or inward affliction, when they drinke both of the same cup, and are plunged in the same miseries. Cast a wicked man into a dungeon and lay him full low, where he can meet with no worldly helpe, what course will he then take? You shall see that either they will blaspheme God, and gnaw their tongues for sorrow, as they that are spoken of, *Reuel. 16*. Or else they will grow desperate, and make away themselves, as *Iudas* and *Achitophel* and other monsters haue done: but let a godly man be laid fast in the same dungeon, he will be full of ioy, when the other is full of desperate griefe, and sing Psalms & powre forth many holy praiers, in
ftcad

Act. 16. 25.

stead of the others imprecations, and blasphemous speeches, *Peter* and *Iudas* had both dealt vnfaithfully (though in a farre different degree and manner) with their Lord and master: and were both in the dungeon, euen in great perplexitie; but *Peter* goes out, confesseth his fault, weepes bitterly, and gaines exceedingly by it. *Iudas* on the other side sorroweth desperately, and speedily dispatcheth himselfe. Whereby doth manifestly appeare the different carriage of the faithfull and of infidels, when they are both ouerburthened with sorrowes and miseries.

This is for singular comfort vnto Gods people, in that *Use 2.* no crosse can befall them, to hinder their prayers; but all shall quicken and inflame the spirit of prayer in them. The issue of their trouble, must needs bee good, when they are watered with many holy teares, and sanctified by many holy requests. If they can waite till their haruest come; such a seede time must needs bring them a plentifull and blessed crop of comfort.

Oh, but what if the pestilence should enter into the familie, and the house should be shut vp, that no body could come to me? What of that? The question now will bee whether you be an hypocrite or a Christian. If you be sure that you are no hypocrite, then though no body come vnto you, yet God will come vnto you: and though you cannot goe to your friends, yet you may goe to God, and that will serue the turne well enough; the spirit of prayer will neuer faile you: and if you can make your requests known vnto the Lord, he will cause all to *worke together for the best*, and giue an happie issue, either by life or death, vnto all your distractions, doubts and feares. *Obiection.* *Answer.* *Rom. 8.*

Verf. 55. I called vpon thy name.] This was it that stirred them vp to prayer, euen the knowledge of Gods name; his maiestie is so glorious, that it would make them flee from him: and his essence is so incomprehensible, that it is *a light that none can haue acesse vnto*, and a huge sea that will drowne such as will aduenture to wade into it: but the knowledge of Gods sufficiencie to helpe, and of his mercie

tie and free fauour, whereby he is ready to helpe, is it that encourageth them to come before the Lord. Which affordeth this doctrine :

Dock. 2.
The right vnderstanding of Gods name, very helpfull in prayer.

Can. 1. 2.

The name of God.

1. Ichouah.

That the name of God is the onely cause that brings Christians into Gods presence, and makes them to call vpon him with strong cries, and seruent requests. This is euident, Psalm. 9. 10. where the Prophet sheweth, how they come to seeke vnto God: *They that know thy name will trust in thee for thou neuer failest them that seeke thee.* How come they to seeke God? They first trust in God. And how come they to trust in God? By the knowledge of Gods name: which till men doe know, they can neuer trust in God, nor seeke to God. Therefore it is said in the songs of Salomon: *Thy name is an ointment powred forth: like vnto that ointment mentioned in the Gospell, which filled all the house with the odour of it.* No ointment can so delight the naturall sense, as the name of God doth the hearts of the faithfull; in which regard it is added in that place, *Therefore the virgins loue thee:* That is, such as doe not goe a whoring after fleshly lusts, and after the vanities of the world. They must needs loue Christ, because they know that there is no euill that can befall them, but in his name they shall haue a medicine against it. And nothing that is good for them, but there they may get a certainty of obtaining it. This name of God is notable and comfortable set downe, Exod. 34. 6. and Isa. 9. 6.

In Exodus thus: *The Lord, the Lord, strong, mercifull, and, gracious, &c.*

The first thing that we may for our comfort here consider of, is the word *Iehouah*: signifying the essence of God, and his absolute perfection in all his attributes, and his constancie in all his properties that follow, as hauing his being in and of himselfe; so that this preuent an objection, concerning all that which followes. For one might say, God indeed hath shewed himselfe; *strong, mercifull and gracious, &c.* But what is that to vs now? Why he is *Iehouah, the same for ever: and therefore looke what he hath*

hath beene in the daies of old, you may be assured hee will be the same still. But because this part of Gods name is handled elsewhere ; it shall be needlesse at large to intreat of it in this place.

See Mr.
Dods expoli-
tion of the
Command.
the preface
thereof.

2 The second thing to be considered is, the strength of God, *the Lord, the Lord, strong, &c.* Whence we are to learn, that all power is in him, and from him, and for him. And *I am Ie-* in like manuer, is Christ called *the mighty God* : Thereby implying not onely that he is mighty in his owne nature, but that he hath his might to vse for our saluation, and our enemies destruction : and that hee doth and will vse it to that purpose.

In which regard it is said in that place; *that he is given to vs.* Add in the first of the *Renelation*, *hee is said to walke in the middest of the seven golden Candlesticks* : that is, in the midst of his Church, and *to haue feet of burning brasle* : Not onely to tread downe all inward and outward enemies, but to consume them when they are downe : for in that respect are his feet said not onely to be of brasle, but of burning brasle.

All weeds when they are cut vp, if the roots bee left behinde, will quickly spring vp againe : therfore will Christ burne vp root and branch, that there may bee no feare nor danger of their second growth.

So that if we knew this part of Gods name, to wit, his al- sufficient power, what affliction or triall should make vs faint ?

The least tentation or affliction, if God support vs not in it, will be too strong for vs : the greatest, yea all rushing at once vpon vs, if this mighty God be on our side, shall not be able to hurt or daunt vs.

Rom. 4.19.
20.21.

This was it that confirmed *Abrahams* faith ; as the Apostle *Paul* witnesseth. Though *Sarabs* wombe were dead, he knew God was not dead, but that hee was able to giue him a sonne of her: And that that God who shall at length raise vs out of the graue, could and would raise him vp a son out of her dead wombe.

F

And

Exod. 16.
& 17.

And so *Moses*, when he had six hundred thousand and vpward, to provide for in the wildernesse, where hee had neither bread nor drinke for them; yet he trusted and relied on God, who could bring water out of the flint, as well as out of the riuier: and bread out of the clouds, as well as out of the barne. *Canaan* he knew could not maintaine them, without Gods blessing, and with it, the barren wildernesse could.

1. Sam. 14. 6.

So *Jonathan* when he went against many thousand *Philistims*, knew Gods name to bee [*Mighty*.] For hee stood resolu'd of this; *that God could deliuer with few, as well as with many.* And yet *Asa* went further: for when hee had a very huge armie comming against him, and no equall forces in any proportion to withstand them, hee notwithstanding comes confidently to God for helpe, assuring himselfe, *that God could saue and deliuer with none, as well as with many.*

2. Chro. 14. 11.

And so may it as truely bee said, that God can helpe by few friends as well as by many: yea, without all friends and meanes, as well as if wee had all that the world could afford vs.

Obiection.
Answer.

Oh but my miserie is desperate!

Neuer say so: What if you be in the low dungeon? Was not *Jonah* so? And yet he prayed and was helped: therefore neuer be dismayed: Your troubles are grear, but your God is greater and mightier to helpe you out of them, then they are to hold you fast still. The Lord made the heauens and the earth, by his word, and drowned the whole world in his displeasure. This mighty Lord, I say, rides vpon the heauens (as it is Deut. 32.) full of maiestie, and full of ability to deliuer you; and to set you free from the strongest bonds of affliction.

3 Mercifull.

3 The third thing in Gods name is, that he is *mercifull*. Which word signifieth, that God hath such bowels of compassion towards his seruants, as a mother hath towards the child of her wombe. There need not many exhortations, much lesse an eloquent oration to a mother, to stirre her

her vp to succour, and relieue her child, when it stands in need of her helpe: and yet put all the kindnesse of all the men and women in the world together, and it will come but to a drop, in comparifon of that sea of mercie that is in our mercifull God.

And this property is well ioyned with the former: for a poore afflicted soule hearing of Gods power might say: I know God is powerfull, but what is that to me? perchance he may vse his power to my ouerthrow. *Obiection.*

Nay (saies he) God is as mercifull as hee is powerfull, why then should any be discouraged by miserie; sith that is the very obiet of inerie? Whence it is that this argument is often vsed in the Scripture: *Lord helpe me, for I am sore troubled: Lord saue me, for I am poore and needie.* *Answer.* Psal. 6. 2. 3. Psal. 86. 1. 2.

And this mercy of God we may more cleerely see in the Father of the prodigall son, who perceiuing his lost child comming towards him, he runnes towards his sonne, and falls on his necke and kisseth him, giuing him all kind entertainment that might be: his verie miserie was a sufficient motiue to worke vpon his fathers heart: neither doth he at all vpbraid him with his former leaud behaviour. Now if an earthly father can be, and ought to bee thus mercifull, how much more will our heavenly father, especially since that he loueth vs better then any earthly father can loue his children? & shewes forth his loue vpon euerie occasion, as the Prophet *Hoseah* testifieth, saying; *Hof. 14. 4. In thee the fatherlesse findeth mercie.* *Luke 15.*

Obiection. Oh but I am worthie of no mercie.

Answer. What of that? Gods name is also *Gracius* 4 *Grations.* That is, louing and shewing mercie without any merit: he will not tarrie till wee deserue it, but will freely shew forth his goodnes towards vs, though there bee no desert on our part. Doe not we giue foode and raiment to little children that hang on the breasts? If parents should stay till they deserue it, they would neuer grow to be men and women. Therefore it is said of *Abraham*, that he beleued in *Rom. 4. 5. him that iustificieth the sinner.* Noting therby, that sin cannot

hinder Gods fauor from offenders, but that through faith they shall be iustified, and made innocent in Gods account, as if they had neuer offended at all.

Let vs not then when we are in distresse, be discouraged, by reason of our corruptions, but goe to the Lord, who will shew himselfe gracious notwithstanding them all.

Obiection.

Oh but what comfort can I sinfull wretch haue, to go to so holy a God?

Answer.

Why doe you not know his name? *He is a gracious God:* and when wee can find no matter of worthinesse in our selues, he can find matter enough in his owne nature and in his sonnes merits. If wee could find any desert in our selues, or our workes, God should lose his name of being gracious.

Obiection.

But alas, I haue prouoked him, and iustly drawne his hand vpon me by mine owne sinnes.

s. Slow to anger.

What if you haue? *he is slow to anger.* That is, long ere he be prouoked, and when he is prouoked, easie to bee appeased. We can no sooner fall out with our sinnes, but he falls in with vs. An earthly father will not take euerie aduantage against his child; and when the child is grieued for a great fault, will not good parents be easily satisfied? And why should we thinke God harder then our selues? At least let vs make him as good as our selues, and be assured that when we haue kindled his wrath against vs, one teare of true repentance will quench all the flame thereof, and draw downe his pitie and compassion vpon vs. To this *Dauid* giueth testimonie, saying: *The Lord is slow to anger, and of great kindnesse: he will not alwaies chide, nor keepe his anger for ever.* And this he himselfe found by experience. For when he, being a King, and that of Gods owne choice, set ouer his owne people, and withall a holy Prophet; in both which respects, he was to bee a paterne of all godlinesse and righteousness vnto others: when hee (I say) after many mercies receiued, had grieuouſlie prouoked the Lord, insomuch as he was angrie with him: and then did not repent for his sinne, but lay in it, and added diuers other

Psal. 103. 8. 9.

2. Sam. 11. 27.

other hainous offences vnto it, yet after all this, God doth not reiect him, but sends his Prophet *Nathan* vnto him, 2. Sam. 12. 13. and is more ready to offer him pardon then hee is to aske it, and when hee did but beginne to make confession of his sinne, God tels him forthwith, that *hee had put away his sinne.*

And this wonderfull readinesse in God to bee appeased towards penitent sinners, the Prophet *Isaiah* maketh mention of; bringing in God himselfe, speaking in this manner: *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwaies wroth: For the spirit should faile before mee, and I haue made the breath.* Where we see, that as *Psalm.* 103. there is a reason drawne from Gods nature, why he cannot deale rigorously with vs; namely, because *hee pities vs as a father doth his child:* So here there is a reason brought from our nature, why he cannot be ouer-seuere, to wit, that *then the spirit would faile before him:* and those whom he hath made and redeemed, would perish and be vtterly consumed. Men were notable to beare the continuance and grieuousnesse of his hand, but would sinke vnder their burthen, and so should he be a greater loser then they, in that hee should lose them, whom he hath so long and so entirely loued, for whom he hath so deere paid: and therefore he saith, *that he will not contend for ever, &c.*

But some might say, it is true indeed, there is no fault on Gods part: if I could fit my selfe to seeke for mercy, and to receiue mercy, as I ought to doe. But alas, I come far short euery way: my prayers are few and weake: my memorie is fraile and slipperie, I cannot conceiue nor carie away the Sermon, nor profit by the Sacrament, and other of Gods ordinances, as others doe, and as I would and should.

What of all this? You must remember that God is abundant in kindnes, he will not breake the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flaxe. It is the propertie of kindnesse to take small things in good worth, to passe by infirmities, and to be easie to be intreated. And this is euident in earthly parents: for they will accept of very small matters at the

Psal. 103.

hands of their children, that would do better if they could: how much more will God who is the author of all kindnes both in men and beasts? who *knoweth whereof we are made, and remembreth that we are but dust.*

Indeed, if we liue in presumptuous finnes, and bee proud and stomack full, and wil not stoupe vnder Gods hand, then Gods greatest kindnesse is to scourge vs, vntill he bring vs home to himselfe. But if we be once sincere and humble in heart, though we cannot attaine to that measure of sanctification which others haue, nor powre out our soule in prayer as we should, and as wee ought: yet God will take all in good part. He that will reward a cup of cold water, he will reward a cold prayer, if wee bee grieued and humbled for our coldnes, and endeuor to come vnto him, with more seruencie. God lookes not for perfection from poore weake creatures, that are full of imperfection.

Objection.

But how shall I know that this *kindnesse of God* shall be performed vnto me, seeing that I haue prayed and waited long, and yet am neuer the neerer?

Answer.

7 *Abundant in truth.*

Psal. 34. 9. 10.

Psal. 50. 15.

Because (as it followes in the next place) God is *abundant in truth* as well as in kindnesse. As he neuer threatens any thing, but he executes it: so hee neuer promiseth any thing, but hee performes it. Neuer any yet could charge him with breach of promise. He hath said, *that those that feare him, shall want nothing that is good: Call vpon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliuer thee, &c.* Who euer did so, and found not according to his expectation? If then none haue euer failed of his hope, why should not wee rest vpon his promise? Take away his truth, and take away his God-head.

Many there are in the world, who, when their money and friends, and outward staies are taken away, beginne to thinke with themselves, what shall wee doe now? What will become of vs? Wee see all is gone. But is Gods truth gone? Hath not hee promised to provide for vs when wee are poore, as wel as when we are rich? When we are in sickness, as well as when we are in health? Hath not he said, *I will*

will not leave thee nor forsake thee? Did not hee provide for Heb. 13.6. vs in our infancie? And why should not we trust in him as well in our age? Oh, then wee had good friends to looke vnto vs. And who raised vp those friends? Cannot God, that inclined the hearts of some to pitie vs then, draw the hearts of others to haue compassion on vs hereafter?

Oh, but I know no friends that will shew me that fauor? Neither did you in your infancie, and yet God did provide some, and that without your intreaty. How much more will he do it now vpon your faithfull prayers? Or else (which is best of all) take you to himselfe, where you shall stand in no more need of friends and helpers.

But because we are much led by example, and looke 8 *Reseruing* how God hath dealt with others: therefore hee addeth *kindnes for* next, [*reseruing mercy for thousands*] Giuing vs to vnder- *thousands.* stand thereby, that hee hath floods of mercy for all that stand in need thereof. Neuer any went to God for mercy, but he found mercy; if hee sought in faith, as God bids him.

With earthly Kings, he that comes not first often comes too late and speeds worst: but it is not so with the King of heauen: he hath sufficient for those that come to him last, as well as for those that come to him first. Wee see this in a creature of God, euen in the sunne, which communicates his light to all, though they be neuer so many, as well as if they were but a few. And what shall we thinke of God the Creator of the same? cannot he comfort many thousands as well as one person, and yet his store nor bee lessened a whit? Yes surely, there are many thousands in heauen, that were once as bad as we are, and yet now they are in a Paradise of rest, out of the reach of all sin and sorrow. And who would not come to such a Physitian, as hath wrought a perfect cure of so many, and that of free cost, and neuer suffered any one to miscarie that was willing to bee his patient?

Men would lie at the poole of Bethesda many yeers, expecting to bee healed: wee neede not lie so long at the gate.

gate of heauen, for the curing of our soules, but wee are sure to be perfectly helped, when wee are truly humbled and fitted for helpe.

Obiection.

But my miseries doe not trouble me so much as my sins, which are many and grievous and of long continuance.

Answer.

9. Forgiuing iniquitie.

For answer to that he saith, that *God forgineth iniquitie, transgression, and sinne.*] And if he should not shew himselfe to be such a God towards the militant Church, hee should lose his name and his people at once: but hee pardons all these kinds of sin. *Iniquitie*] That is, originall sin, and the perverseness of our nature, that cleaves so fast vnto vs, as appeareth, Psal. 51. 5. *Transgression*:] That is, sinnes of rebellion and presumption, for so the word signifieth in the originall. *And sin*:] That is, sins of custome, and such as are grown to an habit: And so this word is taken in the first Psal. and many other places of the Scripture. If any one be wearie of this burthen, God will giue him a speedie dispatch. This a man may boldly claime at Gods hand, and intreate him to deale according to his owne name, which he should lose, vnlesse he should free vs from our sins.

Matth. 1. 21.

This is also the name of his sonne, who is called *Iesus*, because he doth saue his people from their sins. Therefore let vs take the accusation, and humiliation for sinne vpon vs, and pray to God to pardon vs according to his name: and then God will take away the guilt and punishment of sin it selfe from vs, and be fully pacified towards vs.

Obiection.

But yet there might arise another obiection (as vnbeliefe is full of them) which is this: for all that hath beene spoken of Gods goodnesse towards his chosen. yet wee see wicked men prosper and hold vp the head: and Gods children sinke and are trampled vnder foote. And then there comes muttering and repining thoughts, that God doth not gouerne the world righteously, because the righteous are wronged, and the Church ouer-runne by the vngodly of the world.

Answer.

Nay (saith *Moses*) *hee holds not the wicked innocent*] Let them take their swinge, and make hauocke for a time: God may

may spare them long, yet will visit them at the last. Accord- *Not holding*
ding to that of *Nahum*: *God is iealous, and the Lord rene-* *the wicked*
geth: *The Lord renegeth, euen the Lord of anger, the Lord innocent.*
will take vengeance on his aduersaries, and he reserueth wrath *Nahum 1.2.3.*
for his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger, but hee is great in
power, and will not surely cleere the wicked, &c. For as *Haba-*
kuk saith, *he hath ordained them for iudgement, and establisht* *Hab. 1.12.*
them for correction.

Yet we see they goe to their graues in peace, and are not *Obiection.*
in trouble like other men. *Psal. 75.5.*

Say they doe: yet God will meete with them in their *Answer.*
children, and punish their sinnes in their posteritie: as it is
said in the text, *Visiting the iniquities of the parents vpon their*
children, and vpon their childrens children, vnto the third and *II Visiting.*
fourth generation. They shall tast of the bitter cup of Gods
wrath here, as their fathers doe in hell. Oh, but who shall
doe this? There is none to curbe them. Yes God himselfe *Obiection.*
will doe it: he will visit them for their sins. *Answer.*

Here wee see what a number of tentations are swept a-
way, by the right vnderstanding and applying of the name
of God.

Now for that other place, *Isaiah 9. 6.* Christ is there said
to be a counsellor, the prince of peace, &c. Such a counsellor *Christ a coun-*
as is alwaies at hand to aduise vs: for he walks in the mid- *sellor.*
dest of vs. Such a one as is furnished with wisdom suffi-
cient to counsell vs: For he is the ancient of daies, and the *Reuel. 1*
very wisdom of the father. Such a one as will giue vs his
aduice freely. And lastly such a one as can and will make
his counsell effectuall. for he is the mighty God, and can doe
what he will. Therefore what should a Christian trouble
himselfe? Hath he craftie enemies? Goe to Christ for di-
rection, whose wisdom is infinitely beyond their policy.
Hath he strong enemies? Goe to him who is mightier
then they all. In a word, hath he any outward affliction or
inward corruption, that doth annoy and trouble him?
Let him haue recourse to this name of God, and there he
shall find a remedie for all; which being so many waies
G profitable

profitable and helpefull to a Christian, that must needs follow, which was at first set downe, to wit, that the knowledge of the name of God, is a most effectuall meanes to draw vs vnto seruent and faithfull prayer.

Use. 1.

This therefore serues first to confute ignorant persons, and to shew that their prayers are but the exercising of their tongues, and of their lips; because they are not acquainted with Gods name: and thence it is that they giue ouer praying in time of miserie. When they haue money and friends, health and strength and the like, they beginne to thinke and speake with *Dauid*: *That their mount is so strong that they shall neuer bee cast downe*: and conclude with the rich man in the Gospell, *that they haue riches laid vp for many yeeres, and therefore bid their soules take their rest*. But what saith God, *thou foole*, &c. These are ignorant fooles indeed: for doe they not know *that power belongs vnto God? Is it not his name to bee called the mighty God?* Riches haue no power at all in them, they cannot make a man liue one houre longer or happier.

Psal. 30.

Psal. 61.

Psal. 62.

When *Dauid* boasted of his subiects and souldiers, and of the arme of flesh that hee had gotten, what became of it? God withdrew his face a little, and his sonne and subiects and all were against him. And as riches haue no power in them, so neither do they procure any iot of kindnes: *for kindnesse belongs vnto God*: it is his name to *be abundant in kindnes*: And therefore wee must goe to him for these things, and not to the world: and it is Gods mercy that men should sometimes deceiue vs, that so we might learne to trust in God, and to seeke to God for these things, and not so much vnto outward meanes. Carnall men in their prosperitie will bragge, that they can call vpon God as well as the best of them. But this is sure, if Gods name bee not as an ointment powred out and spread vpon their hearts, in time of distresse, they will seeke vnto any rather then vnto God. And thence it is, that when outward things faile them, they are altogether hartlesse, and comfortlesse: They complaine that they want many things, and so they doe

doe indeed: but all is for that they want the knowledge of Gods name: which whosoever knowes, he will not distrust God though he haue no meanes: nor trust in them, though they haue all meanes.

Secondly, this is for instruction: if we would haue comfortable hearing in heauen, in all our wants and miseries, we must labour to know Gods name, as it is reuealed in his word, that so we may be able to reioyce in all distresses, and to quiet our hearts in all distempers. And when wee find more then ordinarie discomforts, let vs take occasion thereby to condemne our selues for our ignorance of Gods name. *Use 2.*

Many that are accounted wise men, are too much cast downe in the time of misery, which is an euident signe that how excellent soeuer they be for worldly policie, yet they want this heauenly wisdom. For if they were acquainted with Gods name, they should be able comfortable to powre out their harts before God, knowing that the Lord which created all things of nothing, is able to saue without meanes, and against meanes.

Thirdly, this is for singuler consolation to those that by many wofull miseries, and sore tentations, haue gotten some experimentall knowledge of Gods name: not a verball, but a working knowledge. They haue felt his power, and tasted of his mercy, and grace, and kindnesse, &c. Such haue enough, yea more then all the world to stay vpon: As Salomon saith; *the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth vnto it, and is exalted. Here is a refuge and a hiding place for all iust men, and for none else.* *Pro. 18. 10.*

Others may make a kind of offer, to goe towards that Tower: but if they faile in righteousness, they will bee so farre from running, that they will goe limping, nay, hale downe right, and neuer come thither: but all that are vp-right in heart, may haue free access, and sufficient shelter when they come thither, not onely from the inuasions of men, but from the wrath of God, and from the strokes of God, as the pestilence, famine, warre, and the like: yea

from the furie of Satan, and from the assaults of sinne.

All other towers are but poore weake cotages. Let men dwell where they will, whither can they go, but death will find them out? They may flie from the plague, but God will pursue them: for he is not an archer that hath but one arrow, or such arrowes onely, as will reach those that are neere: but though they should runne to the end of the world, he is able to shoot at them, and the arrowes of his vengeance will find them out. No strength can defend them, when he comes against them with his strength: nay, all the power of men is but a broken reed, and all meanes of no force in themselves. If wee onely vse them in obedience, they will be as a staffe to leane vpon: if wee rest on them, they will be as a broken staffe that will deceiue vs, and giue vs a fall.

Verf. 56. *Thou hast heard my voice, stop not thine eares.*
57. *Thou drewest neere, &c.* Whence this doctrine ariseth:

Doff. 3.

We must obserue how we speed in religious exercises.

That Gods children in their prayers and seruices, doe marke and know how they speed: so that they cannot onely say, I thanke God, at such and such a time I prayed, but O Lord thou diddest then heare *my voice*, then diddest thou draw neere vnto me: at such a time I was put to it, and thou deliveredst mee out of great danger. This wee see in the spouse, who when her beloued was departed from her, saith; *In my bed night by night I sought him, whom my soule loneth, and found him not.* Shee had not that ioy and refreshing, as she was wont to haue, from the vse of the priuate meanes, and shee knew it, and obserued it full well. Then she went abroad, and there found as little successe. Afterwards shee comes to conferre with Gods Ministers how shee might recouer her loue to Christ, and the feeling of Christs loue vnto her, and yet there shee had not that full successe, as she expected. Then she goes a little further, that is, (as was before shewed) waites patiently vpon God, and then she found him whom her soule loued, and tooke hold of him: that is, faster hold then euer she had done before. She had paid so dearly for her negligence, that shee would be warie

Cant. 3. 1. 2.

warie how she failed in her duety any more. So that when she sped well or ill, she knew how it went with her. This point is further proued vnto vs out of another verse of this Chapter of the *Lamentation*, where these words are vsed: *When I crie and shout, hee shutteth out my prayer*: Not but that God tooke notice of it, and had a time to reward it: but for the present he gaue them no answer. Lament. 3. 8.

They had hard hearts, and God saw that one crie and shout would not be sufficient to mollifie and soften them: and therefore he lets them pray and crie againe and again, and yet still they had the repulse, as they obserued to their great grief. Answerable to this, is that in the *Psalme*, where *Dauid* saith, *If I regard wickednesse in my heart, the Lord will not heare mee*: But God hath heard me, and considered the voice of my prayer. Psal. 66. 18. 19.

And there is reason why as they did marke how they sped, so should we also. Reason.

For vellese we doe so, it is impossible that wee should euer be thankfull for that wee receiue, or lay vp any store of comfort against the time to come. If wee speed ill, wee shall goe away without any care or studie to grow better: if we speed well, wee shall depart without any desire of glorifying God, or of confirming our hearts for afterwards.

Whereas diligent obseruation how God deales with vs, would worke in vs great experience, both for our humiliation and consolation.

For sometimes Gods seruants haue a comfortable answer to their suites, and then they come away as fresh, and nimble, and ioyfull, as if their hearts had beene made glad by sweet and pleasant wine. At another time, they come limping, and fainting away, as if they had receiued some grieuous wound. So for the Sermon, now and then they depart from it, as from some notable feast, so merrie and comfortable, as if they had made the best bargain that euer they did in their liues: at some other times they come out of the Church hanging downe their heads and full of

The second Sermon.

penſiueneſſe, as if they had receiued the ſentence of death. What is the cauſe hereof? Profane perſons thinke they are the melancholieſt, and vnconſtanteſt people in the world. But will not they themſelues looke heauilie on the matter, when they are croſſed in things that are moſt deare vnto them? And why then ſhould they blame Gods ſeruants, if they bee ſometimes merrie, and ſometimes heauie, according as they are croſſed or comforted in the word of life, which is more deare vnto them, then all the treaſures of the earth? Howſoeuer they may charge them to be vnconſtant, yet indeede they themſelues are more vnconſtant: For let them haue to deale with ſome great Iudge, about matters of their eſtate, and let them be told this day, that they are likely to haue good and fauourable hearing: that the Iudge likes well of them, and of their cauſe; how ioyfull and iocund will they be? How will they talke of it, and in a ſort boalt of it? But let them come to the Iudge themſelues the next day, and let him frowne vpon them, and tell them: I vnderſtand you are a leaud fellow: I know your practiſes well enough: looke to your ſelfe and acquite you well, leſt I ſtrip you of you lands and life together. Will not ſuch a ſaluation caſt them into their dumps, and make them looke heauie and ſad, as if they were halfe dead? And if one ſhould aſke them: Why are you ſo variable? They would wonder why hee ſhould make ſuch a queſtion. Haue wee not iuſt cauſe to bee caſt downe (would they ſay) when the Iudge that gaue me ſuch good hopes before, doth now looke and ſpeake ſo wrathfully againſt mee? And wherefore then will you finde fault with Gods ſeruants, who deale with the King and Iudge of heauen and earth, in the matter of their ſaluation: whoſe fauor they eſteeme more than all things in the world: and whoſe diſpleaſure they feare more then all the mens in the world: yea then death it ſelfe? Why (I ſay) doe you finde fault with them, if their comforts ebbe and flow, as matters goe better or worſe betwixt God and them?

Uſe I.

This is for conſutation of carnall hearers, who are affected

sted at all times alike. They haue heard many hundred sermons, but they were neuer more comforted at one, then at another. They are none of these changelings, but the same men still. But let such know, that hee that doth neuer feelee himselfe sicke, it is greatly to bee doubted hee is quite dead. *Paul* was once aliue, before the Law came, and so are all vnregenerate men in their owne conceite: they can heare the word without feare and trembling (they thanke God) and bee neuer troubled in their consciences as some are. Doe you thanke God for this senselesnesse? Nay, doe not so, for that is a shamefull taking of his name in vaine: but rather repent before God, and craue pardon for the same. For they that feare least, are the most hard-hearted people of all other, and they neuer succeed well. Rom. 7.

The like may be said of them who are alwaies alike affected in prayer: they neuer yet knew what a faithfull prayer meanes. Prou. 28. 13.

Secondly, this is for comfort to those that see how they thriue, and marke when they speed well or ill, when they come to the word, to prayer, or the Sacrament: if they find a good effect, they may bee assured that God loues them; and so bee thankfull for his mercie, and confident thereof for afterwards: If they goe away without an answer, and without comfort (as many times the Saints of God doe) they shall gaine a greater measure of humilitie, and bee more broken hearted: and though they cannot end with thanksgiuing, yet they may end with the prayer of the Publican; *Lord be mercifull vnto me a sinner.* Use 2.

And there is as great gaine by humiliation at some times, as by consolation and sweet feelings at other times. For if wee should haue alwaies a present answer, wee should grow secure, and contemne these answers of God. For such is our vile nature, that when things grow common, they grow by degrees out of reckoning and estimation with vs: therefore God will not suffer vs alwaies to haue present hearing.

What is the difference then (may some man say) betweene Question.

tweene the regenerate and vnregenerate: sith both of them pray, and neither of them haue hearing.

Answer.

Heere is the difference, that the one sort are not dead as the other are. He that feeles an ague or any other disease, and is vexed and pained with it, any simple bodie will say, surely such a one is aliue: and so it may be concluded of euerie Christian that is troubled in his soule, that his prayers finde no better accesse vnto Gods throne: it is sure such a one hath the life of grace in him, which is an euerlasting life.

But as for wicked men that neuer feele their sicknesse, but grow to comparisons, that they can pray as well as the best of them: they are dead in sinne, and without repentance shall perish in their finnes.

Dott. 4.
Whom God
once heares in
mercie hee euer
heares.

Verf. 56. Thou hast heard my voice, therefore stop not thine eare.] Whence this doctrine may bee gathered: That those whom God hath once heard in mercie, hee will alwaies heare, preuaile with God once and euer. With men it is not a good argument to say, Sir you paid such and such a debt for me; you holpe me out of prison, such and such a time, therefore doe it againe: for it may bee hee hath by that meanes so weakened his estate already, that he is not able to doe the like againe. But it is otherwise with God, all his former benefits, are as so many bonds for new blessings: if hee inclined his eare vnto vs, such and such a time, when wee powred out our prayers and teares before him, we shall finde the like successe againe, vpon the vse of the like meanes.

Reason.
Heb. 13. 8.

The reason hereof is drawne from Gods nature: *He is Iehouah, yesterday, to day, and the same for ever.* If hee haue receiued vs yesterday, he can and will doe it in like sort to day, yea, and hence-forward for euer, there is no change in him. There remaines the same cause of mercie still in his nature: hee had as much reason to loue *Peter* after his fall, as before. And when *Christ* prayed that *Peters* faith might not faile, that proceeded from *Christs* goodnesse, not from *Peters*. If our prayers haue been once a sweete smelling sacrifice

sacrifice in the nostrils of the Lord, they shall neuer bee re-
 lected by him: once welcome to him and alwaies. It is an
 argument that will surely preuaile with God, *Lord thou*
drewest neere once, therefore doe it still. To this purpose it is Heb. 13. 2.
 said, *that Christ is the author and finisher of our faith*: where
 once he hath laid the foundation, he will reare vp the buil-
 ding, and bring it to perfection. So is it said in the Psalme:
From euermlasting to euermlasting thou art our God. If euer God Psal 90. 2.
 should haue refused to shew vs fauour, it would haue been
 then, when wee were dead in sinne: but euen then hee
 sought to vs, ere wee sought after him, and before we ima-
 gined any such matter, hee was at the cost to bestow his
 Sonnes blood vpon vs, that his spirit might be shed abroad
 in our hearts, that wee might haue experience of his loue:
 that wee might haue title to his sonnes death and merits,
 and being once his sonnes and daughters might still be fa-
 uoured, relieued and succoured by him.

Let vs consider what wee doe, and be thorowly groun-
 ded and perswaded vpon good warrant, before wee take
 comfort to our selues in Gods mercies: but when wee haue
 a good foundation to build our assurance vpon, let vs
 know that all Gods mercies are euermlasting mercies.

First, this doctrine makes for the reproofe and terror of
 such men and women, as hope that if the pestilence, or
 death, or any other heauie affliction should come, they
 should bee in case good enough, and doe as well as the
 best. And why? They will make many good prayers, and
 desire God to bee mercifull to them, and to forgiue them.
 Well, what will they answere to this? They haue made
 good prayers (as they call them) heretofore, but what en-
 tertainment did they finde with God? They haue heard
 many a sermon, but what grace haue they gotten thereby?
 They haue come to the Sacrament as often as their neigh-
 bors, but what mortification haue they gained by it? Nay
 surelie they cannot say much for such matters: they are
 things that they neuer marked. Then their case will bee
 hard when trouble comes. If they haue no old store, they

Use 1.

H

will

Math. 15.

will be shut out as the foolish virgins were.

A Christian hath an old stocke which he liues vpon: God hath heard him often, he hath giuen thanks to God, as often, or at least very often: he hath gone through the pikes, but stil God hath been at his right hand, the remembrance whereof, will much sustaine the heart.

But as for them that haue no experience of Gods former fauors, in answering them in the daies and times when they haue called vpon him, they can haue little hope that they shall find any kindnesse from him, when afflictions take hold of them.

If a prisoner that hath deserued death should say, hee hopes well, and lookes for fauor: And why? He hath euery day put vp two or three supplications to the Iudge: we would aske him presently, but what answere receiued you? If he should tell vs, nay I neuer lookt to that: we would not thinke he should speed much the better for all his supplications. Such is the case of hypocrites, that draw neere vnto God with their lips, but not with their hearts: though they thinke themselues the safer and better for that, yet in truth they are not, because they had neuer in their liues any signe of Gods loue towards them for good, vpon the making of their suites knowne vnto him. And therefore let them get some of this store: for that is it that will stand them more in stead then all the goods in the world.

Use 2.

Psal. 77. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Secondly, here is a vse of comfort for them that haue lost the sight and feeling of Gods fauor. Had they it euer at all? Then they shall bee sure to haue it againe. For this was *Danids* case: *He did thinke on God, and was more troubled: he prayed, and his spirit was full of anguish, and all seemed to make against him. What then? I considered (saith he) the daies of old, and the yeeres of ancient time: I called to remembrance my song in the night, I communed with mine owne heart, and my spirit searched diligently, &c.* He recounts with himselfe, how faithfull he had beene vnto God: how mercifull God had beene vnto him, and then his little sparke of hope and comfort became a great flame.

If

If a man haue old prouision, he will doe well enough in the hardest times. If one can say from an humble and sincere heart: Lord thou knowest that I haue shed many a bitter teare in secret for my sins: I haue often with ioy praised thee for thy mercies, and powred out my heart in singing Psalmes in priuate: I haue sought thee in the night, when no bodie was by, when no eye was priuie vnto it: and at such times thou hast vouchsafed to looke downe from heauen with a mercifull eye vpon me, and hast filled my soule with ioy vnspeakeable and glorious, &c. If (I say) one haue these and the like euidences from former experience, he may assure his heart that God will still bee found of him in goodnesse till the shutting vp of his daies, and neuer withdraw his louing kindnesse from him. Oh, but *Obiection.* now God frownes vpon mee, and withholds his louing countenance from me: What then? Hath there not beene *Answer.* a time when you could say, God drew neere vnto you, and beheld you with a fauourable eye? Yes, they cannot denie that, why then neuer feare, he will returne againe, though *Psal. 30. 5.* hee hide his face for a time: Albeit, *beauinesse may endure for a night, yet ioy shall come in the morning.* For if God be once ours, hee is euer ours. And this should bee the stasse and stay of Christians, when they haue lost their feeling.

Vers. 56. Stop not thine eare from my sigh, and from my cry. Here is shewed what seruice they brought vnto God: they did *not pray alone, but sigh, nor sigh alone, but cry.* That is, they drew forth their prayers from a feruent hart, which was as a thirstie land that gapes for the raine, and is euen ready to drinke vp and deuoure the clouds. Which words afford vs this doctrine:

That they that would not haue God to shut his eares against their prayers, must be sure that they sigh and crie: *Doct. 5.* and that their petitions proceed from a broken heart, and *Feruencie in prayer requisite.* from an humble spirit. So the Prophet *Joel* bids them, *rend your hearts, and not your garments, &c.* For till the heart be euen puld in peeces by godly sorrow, sinne and lust will *Joel 2. 13.*

Psal. 51. 17.

Mark. 7. 34.

1. Sam. 1. 15.

not out: and then there can be no acceptance looked for with God, either of vs or of our seruices. Therefore *Dauid* saith; *the sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit: a contrite and broken heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise.* Therefore did *Christ* groane in his spirit; when hee prayed for that poore man in the Gospell. So did *Hannah* sigh and weepe sore, and powred out her soule before God.

Reason.

And there is good reason, to moue vs to labour thus inwardly to be touched: For till wee haue the sense and feeling of our wants, wee may well speake, but wee can neuer pray: till the heart be pained with sinne and corruption, it is impossible to be seruent for the pardon of it, as it is for one that hath no feeling of pouertie, earnestly to intreat for a supplie of his necessities: and for one that hath no sense of his sicknes, to be an instant suter for the meanes of health.

Use. 1.

First, this serues for the reproofe of those that come with drowisie and verball prayers: who deale like corrupt and naughtie Lawyers, that looke for a fee, and yet when they are at the barre, tell a drowisie and idle tale, without any feeling of their clients cause: So many there are that come with words of course to intreat God to pardon their sins, and strengthen their faith, but neuer powre out their soules before God, but onely spend a little breath: And they speed accordingly; for their cold prayers bring but cold successe.

Psal. 32.

And this is true not onely of the wicked, but euen of the godly. *Dauid* rored and cried, but hee was neuer the better, till he confessed his sinne, being inwardly grieved for the same: but then both sinne and punishment were removed at once.

Jam. 5. 9.

This may teach vs to strue with the Lord in our prayers and supplications; labouring for this crying and sighing that is so needefull: and then doing as here the Church did, we shall speed as they did. Many there are that sigh in their troubles. But how? *James* tels vs: *They sigh one against another, and not vnder the burthen of their sinnes,*

nor

nor through an earnest desire of Gods mercie: They ligh vnder the waight of vnkindnesse that lie vpon them, and clamor against men, but haue little feeling of their owne vnkindnesse against God to bee humbled for them. But these are signes of the flesh, and not of the spirit. Let vs grone from a broken heart, and the Lord will giue vs life, *when we are troubled in spirit*: and the longer we waite *Isa. 57. 15.* and crie, the greater measure of comfort we shall haue, and the longer it shall tarrie with vs.

Verf. 57. *Thou drewest neere.*] Not in his essence: (for so is he alwaies alike neere) but in his mercifull presence and with gracious deliuerance. Which words thus vnderstood, doe yeeld vs this point of doctrine:

That in the day that we draw neere to God in prayer; *Doff. 6.* God will draw neere to vs in mercy: when we send vp our petitions vnto him; he will send downe speedy and comfortable helpe vnto vs. Those that are sure vnto God, *God is as ready to heare as we to pray.* shall bee alwaies sure of good successe: euen about that that they can aske or thinke. Whether their requests bee that their enemies may bee repressed, or that their owne corruptions may be subdued, or whatsoeuer else, they shall be sure to speed well. So saith our Sauiour; *Who soeuer* *Matth. 7. 8.* *asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.* Let one knocke at the chamber of Presence of an earthly King, if he be poore and base, he shall be bid to stand backe: but let one knocke at Gods presence chamber, how meane and contemptible soener hee be, he shall haue no repulse. As *David* testifieth; *God is* *Psal. 145. 18. 19* *neere to all that call vpon him, yea to all that call vpon him in truth: hee will fulfill the desires of those that feare him.* Though their hearts be so oppressed y^e they can bring no words that is no matter: God will haue respect to their very desire.

Men will not heare such many times as haue been good and faithfull seruants vnto them: but God will heare such as haue bene rebels against him, whensoeuer they turne vnto him by true repentance, and crie vnto him from a broken heart.

2.Chron.17.3.

This we see in the booke of *Chronicles*, where it is said, that *the Israelites liued many yeares without the true God*: And why? because they had no preaching, nor powerfull ministerie, *no Priest to teach them*, as there it is said: yet *who-soener returned in his miserie and sought God, he was found of him*; according to that saying, *Who-soener shall call vpon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

Acts 2.

Luk. 13.42.43.

1.Chron.33.

An example of Gods goodnesse in this regard, we haue in *Ionah*, who albeit he had dealt foolishly, and was cast in to the sea for it, yet God heard him out of the bellie of the fish, and set him vpon the drie land againe. So the theefer on the crosse, had bin a notable malefactor, yet he no sooner opened his mouth for mercie, but Christ (though in great extremitie at that time) respected him, and his suite: neuer casting him in the teeth with his old sinnes. So *Manasses* had been a wofull and miserable sinner, yet when he cried to the Lord in his distresse, he heard him, set him free, and restored him againe to his kingdome. *Hee had done euill in the sight of the Lord, like the abominations of the heathen: he reuiued Idolatrie which his father had abolished, worshipped the host of heauen, defiled the Temple of God, caused his sonnes to passe thorow the fire, gaue himselfe to witchcraft, and charming, and sorcerie: and did very much euill in the sight of the Lord, and that to anger him*: After all this, God admonished him by his Prophets, but *hee would not heare*. Then the Lord brought vpon him the Captaines of the host of the King of *Asshur*, which put him in fessers, and bound him in chaines, and carried him to *Babel*.

Now being in fore tribulation, *he prayed vnto the Lord his God, who was intreated of him, and heard his prayer.*

Psal. 107.
10. &c.

And to shut vp all, whatsoeuer our case bee, in *Psal. 107.* it is shewed, that if we seeke to the Lord, we shall haue helpe. Some are rebels and care not for the word of God, but despise the counsels of the most high; then he casts them in prison, and binds them in brasse and iron, so that al their hope is gone: at length they crie vnto the Lord; which they can no sooner do, but he breakes the gates of brasse and the barres of

of iron asunder, and sets them at libertie : so that an humble and seruent prayer, we see, drawes vs out of bondage, and sets vs at large : and in stead of mourning and heauinesse, giues vs matter of reioycing, and praising of God.

Another is cast into the sea, euery foote readie to bee swallowed vp, the Pilot hath neither skill nor will to help; yet when their prayers ascend vnto heauen, God rebukes the sea and the winds, and they are quickly at the haven *where they would be.*

And so for famine and euerie other miserie, God hath a medicine for euery sicknesse, and a salue for euery sore: and when men crie vnto him, he is readie to helpe them in all extremities, as is there more particularly specified.

I Which serues to reprocue our miserable blindnesse and hardnesse, who notwithstanding Gods sufficiencie and readines to helpe, yet will seeke vnto vaine helps, digging to our selues cesterne that will hold no water. If the Lord had euer failed vs, or any other that rested on him, there had been some reason to doe so : but seeing God would haue vs beholding vnto him, and hee hath neuer failed any that waited vpon him, why should wee not turne to God, rather then goe to any other? *Use 1.*

Oh, but the times are hard, and the world is naught. It is so to you, because you are so to God : and iust it is that you should not finde reliefe, because you seeke it not where it might be found. *Obiection. Answer.*

Secondly, this makes for singular consolation : would we know how it shall goe with vs for bodie and soule, for name and state and all ; then let vs looke what course wee take. Doe we call vpon the name of God ? Then help and comfort is at hand : *God is neere vnto all them that call vpon him in truth :* though not with that strength of faith as they should. *If wee seeke him, hee will be found of vs.* Hee limiteth vs not for time nor things ; and therefore wee may looke for helpe at all times, and in all things : and when wee haue most neede, then wee shall bee sure of the best helpe. *Math. 7.8.*

But

Rules to be
observed.

Iob. 11. 14.

2. Chron. 7.

14.

Iam. 4. 8.

Obiect.

Answer.

Cant. 3. 1.
&c.

But if wee would be certaine of this comfort, wee must withall obserue these rules:

1 That wee put all wickednesse out of our hearts, and out of our hands: *that wee humble our selues, and turne from our wicked waies.* Let vs remoue our sinnes, and God will remoue our crosses. So *Iames* exhorts them, *Purge your hands ye sinners, and your hearts ye hypocrites:* that is it that they must doe, if they would haue God to *draw neere vnto them.* For God loues not to dwell in a heart defiled with sinne: he will turne his eyes and eares from vs, if we continue in our euill waies: because when our tongues crie for mercie, our sinnes crie for vengeance.

But, will some man say, who can looke for hearing from God, if the case stand thus? for who can come to him without iniquitie?

Though wee cannot come without iniquitie, yet wee may come without the loue and liking of iniquitie, and with sorrow and shame for our iniquitie: and then it neuer hinders our prayers, as wee see in the examples before alleaged.

2 Another rule is, that wee must seeke God by all his meanes, as in that place of the *Canticles* before alleaged, when the Church had lost Christ, that is, the feeling of his loue, and the sense of that communion which formerly she had had with him, she vseth all priuate and publike meanes, and at length commeth to conference with Gods seruants, (which few will do till they be driuen to it of necessitie) and then hauing waited a while, *she finds him whom her soule loued.* The same must be our practise: if one medicine will not serue the turne, vse another: Pray, fast, meditate, conferre, and then at last the Lord will bee found in mercie. But as wee are slacke in vsing any of the meanes, so shall wee faile in our comfortable expectation of fauour from God.

3 The last rule is, that we must vse the meanes diligently, and in good earnest: for if wee make base account of Gods mercies, it is iust wee should goe without them. The
prayer

prayer of the righteous auailcs much, but with this condition, *if it be fervent. God deliuereth the poore when he crieth.* Iam. 5. 16. Plal. 72. 12. If they would haue hearing, there must bee crying. *God powres forth floods of grace: but vpon whom? On the thirstie ground.* Isa. 44. 3.

Hence is it that a number reade, and heare, and pray, and yet preuaile not, because they doe it so drowlie and carelesslie. The Lord deferres to helpe them, because they are not fit for helpe, and doe not strue and wrestle in their prayers as *Iacob* did. Let vs therefore vse all the meanes, Hosca. 12. 3. and that with constancie and carefulnesse, and then wee shall obtaine our hearts desire in mercie.

Verf. 57. Thou saidst, Feare not.] Not that there came any such voice vnto their cares, or that God vsed any extraordinary meanes to speake vnto them, but when they drew neere to God, and cast their cares vpon him, and laid open their sorrowes vnto him, God did so comfort them, as if hee had spoken vnto them: they were content to make him their stay, and to trust him with their soule and state and all, and then hee pacified their hearts, and gaue them an expected answer to their prayers. Now in that God said, *Feare not*, the point is:

That God onelie can cure the heart of feares. If ten thousand Prophets had said vnto them, *feare not*, if God had not said so by his spirit, they would haue feared for al that. For first men cannot remoue the cause of feare, which God onely can. Thence it is that the *wicked flee, when none pursueth them: whereas the righteous are bold as a Lion.* Doct. 7. God onelie frees the heart from feares. Reasons 1. Pro. 28. 1. Because their sinnes are remoued, and they reconciled to God through Christ, who hath made a sufficient paiement for them, to satisfie his fathers iustice.

2 Secondly, God onelie can giue faith, which rid the heart of feare: in which regard Christ saith; *why did you feare, O yee of little faith?* Implying thereby, that all our troublesome distempers, proceede from want of faith.

Now because none can giue that but the liuing God, therefore none can heale the heart of feares but only God.

Ier. 31.
Ezec. 3. 6.

3 A third reason is, because God onely can put his true feare into our hearts, which is a mighty defence against false feares. As godly sorrow is a strong fortresse against worldly sorrow, and godly ioy a strong bulwarke against carnall ioy. Therefore it is said, Psal 112. 1. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, &c. Hee shall not bee afraid of ill tidings.*

Use 1.

First, this confutes their follie and error, that thinke if they go two or three miles from the place where the sickness is, and there haue their gates shut, and all things carefully looked vnto, then they should not be so fearefull as they are: as if that outward meanes could cure the heart of feares; nay, that must be the Lords worke. If they carrie with them the pestilence of an ill conscience, an heart full of couetousnesse, full of pride, and of worldly lusts, death will enter into the window, if it cannot at the doore, and will find them out, and set vpon them at midnight, as well as at midday. For God hath a quarrell against their sins, and he will pursue them whithersoever they goe: and how can they stand, when the curse of God hath them in chase? Will you feare the plague-sore vpon the body; and will you not much more feare it vpon your soules? Will you flee from that that is but a medicine vnto the godly; and not from that which is the very bane of the whole man? In truth those that carie with them a heart full of pride, and lust, and such iniquities as God abhorres, whithersoever they liue, are in greater danger then the godly that liue in the pest-house it selfe, hauing their hearts purified by faith, and their hope settled vpon Iesus Christ.

And therefore thinke not to put away such feares, by gaming and companie-keeping, by eating and drinking and laughing: for they will returne againe, though they may be smothered for a time, and an ill conscience will bee a fearefull conscience.

Use 2.

Secondly, this doctrine ministreth vnto vs this instruction, that if we would be disburthened of feares, we should go to God, that can worke in vs a thorow cure. Not as if
the

the meanes of seruing Gods providence, were to be neglected, or as if we should not walke circumspectly, and auoid the occasions of danger: but when we doe so, wee should not rest on the meanes, nor thinke, I am out of the place where the plague is, therefore I am free from Gods stroke. If one should say, I cannot die till God haue appointed, and therefore I may goe into places of infection, this were a tempting of God: but it were worse for a wicked sinner to thinke, I am not neere places of infection, therefore I am safe.

If then wee would bee soundly cured of feares, first let vs goe vnto the Lord with a broken heart, and beseech him to put courage into vs, and to giue vs assurance of eternall life; and the ioy of the holy Ghost; then come life or death, wee shall not bee much dismayed. This is one speciall meanes, to free our hearts from vnneccessarie feares, euen faithfull prayer: as the Apostle shewes, where hee saies, *In nothing be carefull, but in all things let your requests bee made knowne to God, &c.* Hee bids them not take away the occasions without, but heale the heart within; for then they shall be safe enough: *The peace of God that passeth all vnderstanding, shall keepe their hearts and minds in Christ Iesue*: that is, in a blessed communion with Christ Iesus, whereby they shall bee possessed with such peace as none knoweth what it meanes, but those that haue tasted of it: which quiets and sets downe the heart and minde, and settles the same in the assurance of a happie issue, out of all straites and difficulties: as wee see in *Dauid*, who hauing committed himselfe to God, who was able and had promised to helpe him, he triumphs ouer all his enemies, and saith hee *will not feare though ten thousand should compassse him round about.* That was great oddes: and one would thinke he had little need to vse such speeches, but rather to runne away as fast as he could, at least he should take little sleepe in the night, so long as hee was in such danger: or if hee did lie downe and sleepe, he should haue little hope to rise againe in the morning: yet we see ver. 5.

Helpes against feares.

1. Prayer.

Philip. 4. 6.

Psal. 3.

The second Sermon.

that hee laid him downe and slept, and rose againe, because the Lord sustained him: and this he got by calling vpon God: as it is verſ. 4.

1. Righteous-
nes.
Pro 28. 1.

2 Secondly, if we would not be oppressed with feares, labor to be righteous: for wickednesse makes men dastardlie, whereas righteousness makes men stout as Lyons, that will not looke ouer the shoulder, for the barking of euery dogge, but walke on without all feare. Indeed the child of God, will not bee presumptuous; neither will hee bee timorous: though his enemies, sinne, Satan and the world be strong, yet he knows God is stronger, and that none euil can come vnto him without the Lord.

Which if we can thorowly meditate vpon, and take this receite euery morning, to season our hearts with the feare of God, and to wash our hearts and hands from vnrepented sins; walke where we will, so it be in our waies, nothing shall be able to hurt vs.

Verſ. 58. *Thou hast maintained the cause of my soule.*] That is, thou hast stood on my part, and freed mee from death, that was intended against me. For though my name and libertie and riches be taken from me, yet *my life is redeemed*: and that is thy mercie that bodie and soule are not yet parted. Whence the doctrine is:

Doct. 8.
God vpholds
his.
Isa. 44. 23.

That God is the maintainer and vpholder of his people. Howsoeuer Kings and Princes be nursing fathers vnto Gods Church, yet that is not because he needs them, but because he would doe them a good turne, in employing them in his seruice. And therefore may God be called the vpholder of his people, because he saues them frō their sinnes; and from the punishments due to their sins, which no man can doe: *He watches over them night and day, and waters them euerie moment; and hee will contend with them that contend against his people: Isa. 49. 25.*

Isa. 17. 3.

This should strike a terror into the hearts of those that are iniurious vnto Gods seruants: they are bold where the hedge is lowest; euerie dwarfe aduentures to leape ouer,

But

But let them know, that God is as a wall of fire about his Church, and he will maintaine the right of his children.

Indeed their props are, and still haue beene, so weake; thier enemies so many, so malicious, and so strong, that it is a miracle the Church stands to this day: but God hath beene, and euer will be the vpholder of it, and therefore it must needs goe ill with those, that list vp themselves against it.

Secondly, here is a notable consolation for the afflicted people of God. How soeuer they haue few meanes and few friends; and where they should haue most helpe they haue least; where they looked for comfort, they find discomfort; and where they thought to be enriched, they are impou-
Use. 2.
 rished: yet if they can pray, all shall be well.

If money and friends, and large reuenues and the like, had beene the vpholders of the Church, it would haue gone to the ground long ere this. But what saith the Church here? *O Lord thou hast maintained the cause of my soule.* There is our stay: let vs bee sure, wee haue a good cause, and lay it before Gods iudgement seat, and then though we be ouerborne, God will not be ouerborne, but he will stand on our side, euen hee that loues goodnesse, and hates wickednesse, and will be auenged on those that bend themselves and their endeavors to doe mischief vnto his people. *Isa. 49. 26.*

We would willingly haue him to bee our Iudge, who is most iust, who carries the greatest loue to vs, and our cause, and the hardest mind against our aduersaries: such an one is God. And therefore seeing we haue a good cause to stand in, euen the matter of our saluation; and enemies whom God hates with a deadly hatred, the diuell, the world and the flesh, &c, this should put life and heart into vs, to goe vnto Christ Iesus our Iudge, who hath so dearely loued vs, as to lay down his life for vs, that hee might deliuer vs from all our enemies, and bring vs through the troubles, and tentations of this miserable world vnto euermlasting happinesse in the heauens. When

The second Sermon.

wee are ouercharged with burthens and tentations; let vs lay them vpon him, and say, Lord, thou hast yndertaken to comfort thy children: I am not able to vndergoe this that is vpon me; therefore doe thou maintaine my cause, and helpe and deliuer me from my miserie.

Verf. 59. *Thou hast seene my wrong.*] From these words this doctrine may be collected:

Doff. 9.
All wrongs
knowne to
God.

That there is nothing done, spoken, or thought against any Christian, but God takes knowledge of it: there is not one practise, slander, or deuice of cruell beasts against the sheepe of Christ, but God sees it, and markes it. And this must needs be so:

Reason 1.

1. First, because they are his flocke; and therefore hee loues to looke vnto them, especially sith hee hath paid so deere for them.

Psal. 94.
Eph. 4. 6.

2. Secondly, it is his nature to behold all things. *For he that made the eye, shall not bee seene?* Hee is *above vs all, and through vs all, and in vs all.* Yea, wee are as it were the apple of his eye. Now it is a hard matter for one to come with thornes to put out anothers eye, and hee not take notice of it: and

Psal. 69. 7.

3. Thirdly, God doth the rather obserue the indignities that are offered vnto his children, because their prophane adversaries doe hate his image in them. For when they were as bad as themselves, they could liue with them twentie or thirtie yeeres, and bee good friends with them: but when once they renounce the seruice of Satan and of their owne lusts, vnto which they are in bondage still, then they oppose with might and maine against them; and therefore it is said, *for thy sake binewe suffered rebuke, shame hath covered our face.*

Ruel. 30. 12.

4. The fourth and last reason, why God must needs take notice of the wrongs done vnto his seruants, is, because it belongs to him to reward every one according to their workes. Hee must and will giue them full pay, and therefore hee keeps all vpon iust and due record. As the workes of the righteous shall stand for them; so shall the workes

workes of reprobates be written in great capitall letters against them, that all the world may take notice of them at the last day.

This offers vnto vs matter of singular comfort. Howso- *Use.*
euer the aduersaries be busie and watchfull to plot and procure the hurt of Gods Church; they cannot be so vigilan for the hurt of it, as God is watchfull for the good of it: and therefore they may be sure they shall haue a happie issue out of all their troubles, if so be they can make their mone to God, and waite patiently for his mercy.

But what need we lay open our griefes before him, see- *Obiection.*
ing that he knowes them all before hand?

Though he doe know them, yet hee would haue you to *Answer.*
preferre your bill of complaint, and that will be for the increase of your comfort, and further experience of his loue: and howsoeuer hee purpose to destroy the wicked, yet would he haue you to go on in your suit against them still.

Neither is this to bee restrained onely to corporall enemies, but it holds much more strongly for spirituall enemies. Say a man bee surcharged with sinne and Satan: let him bemoane his case before the Lord, and it will be a marvellous ease vnto him. If one of our children shuld but say, father or mother, I am exceeding sicke, ready to faint vnder my paines, &c. he need say no more: this would set their hearts and hands on worke to doe him good. And is there not farre more loue in our heavenly Father? Yes

surely: and therefore in all such extreamities, let God

bee our refuge, and let vs cast all our cares and

sorrowes vpon him, who is able and wil-

ling to beare them, and in due season

to free vs from them, and in the

end, to make vs gainers

by them.

FINIS.